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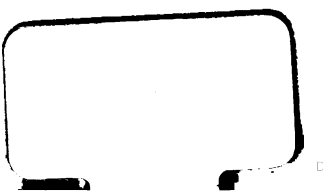

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# REUBEN APSLEY.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF BRAMBLETYE HOUSE,

THE TOR HILL, &c.

[Horace Smith]

---

"Fie on ambition! Fie on myself! that have a sword, and yet am ready to famish! These five days have I hid me in these woods, and durst not peep out, for all the country is laid for me."

SHAKSPEARE.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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# REUBEN APSLEY.

## CHAPTER I.

"If I am
Traduced by ignorant tongues, which neither know
My faculties nor person, yet will be
The chronicles of my doing, let me say
'Tis but the fate of place, and the rough brake
That virtue must go through. We must not stint
Our necessary actions, in the fear
To cope malicious censurers."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE day of Reuben's departure from Goldingham Place, and of his flight to Lyme to join the Duke of Monmouth, had proved a most anxious one to his uncle. The seizure of his brass cannons, of which he presently received



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information, gave him some uneasiness, from his apprehension that it might occasion him to be thought a partizan of the insurgents; although he was perfectly ignorant of the transaction until after its occurrence; while the non-appearance of his nephew immediately awakened a thousand misgivings in his mind. During their short colloquy on the subject of the rebellion, he had suspected from his looks and hurried manner, that he meditated some enterprize which he did not choose to avow; and he had found no difficulty in discovering that they entertained diametrically opposite sentiments as to the course which it became a prudent patriot to adopt under the circumstances of the country. Shrewd, circumspect, and wary, Goldingham had not only foreseen from the first the fatal termination of Monmouth's desperate adventure, but judging from the relentless and bigoted character of the King, that he would visit the insurgents with a double wrath, both as rebels and as heretics, he anticipated an unsparing cruelty in his proceedings, when he should have crushed their

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projects. His anxiety on Reuben's account, therefore, was not only painfully intense, as his protracted absence confirmed all his suspicions, but filled him with keen apprehensions as to his own liability to be compromised, when it became bruited abroad in the neighbourhood that his nearest relation, and his brass cannons, were in the service of the rebels. As a measure of precaution, therefore, he went before a neighbouring magistrate, accompanied by one of his tenants, who had witnessed the dismantling of his little batteries, and who made a deposition upon oath of the whole occurrence; to which Goldingham added the circumstance that his nephew had not since been seen, wishing it to be inferred that he had been forcibly carried off by the rebels, though this of course constituted no part of his statement. At all events, he considered it an exculpation of himself; while it might eventually benefit Reuben to have thus publicly recorded the fact of his disappearance, whatever might have occasioned it.

Such was the sole foundation for Hewson's



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story to Reuben, that his uncle had been arrested and released upon bail, although it was perfectly true that soldiers had been quartered in his house, and that his grounds were beset with people upon the look-out for his nephew, his name being now enrolled in the list of the gentry for whose apprehension a reward was offered. Such rude inmates quarrelling and revelling in his hall, especially as they chanced to belong to an Irish regiment, and professed the religion which his diseased imagination invariably connected with Popish plots and massacres, could not fail to irritate his terrors, even to a preposterous excess. He became a perpetual hog in armour, his silken panoply and Protestant flail being never laid aside, even for a moment. What little sleep he obtained was under the special guard of this shirt of woven mail, with the additional protection of loaded pistols by his bed-side; a bristling and uneasy apparatus, which by stimulating terrific dreams, scared his mind while it afforded but a doubtful security to his body. If he took his horn-headed cane, and ventured to walk

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round the grounds, he detected evesdroppers skulking about the premises, who were, in fact, lurking to gather tidings of Reuben, but whom the prevailing malady of his mind instantly converted into truculent assassins and plotters. When, in addition to these manifold subjects of annoyance and vexation, his thoughts reverted, as they perpetually did, to Reuben, whom he really loved,—who was now wandering he knew not whither as a proscribed rebel, and whose capture would probably be followed by an ignominious death, it may readily be supposed that his self-gratulating "Hem!" was no longer heard; that the lump sugar in his waistcoat pocket, which found a rapid consumption when he was in a complacent mood, remained in its depositary unnoticed and undiminished, and that he wore a most rueful look, when in his solitary rambles he ejaculated "Wheugh! is this the peace, safety, and tranquillity, I was to find in the country? Adzooks! I wish I was at this moment sitting behind my great ledger in Throgmorton Street."

Two or three days after the disturbance

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occasioned in his house by the first notification of the Duke's landing, he went over to the Rookery for the purpose of gathering tidings respecting the progress and prospects of the invaders, when, on reaching the bowling-green in front of the house, he encounterd Lady Crockatt, whom he had not seen since she had so unceremoniously deprived him of his carriage, for the purpose of effecting her own flight with more rapidity from the supposed dangers of a popish massacre. The result of her selfish finesse upon that occasion had accorded rather with her merits than her anticipations. Timothy, not knowing very accurately the cross-road to her ladyship's mansion, betrayed by the darkness of the night, drowsy with the ale he had been drinking, and incensed at being ordered out for a stranger, when Rupert, his favourite horse, was known to be tender in one of his fore feet, had contrived to find his way into a newly ploughed field, where he presently stuck fast, and informed her ladyship that he had come to the end of his journey, since he could neither get the carriage forwards nor

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backwards. With many lugubrious looks and woe-begone exclamations she rebuked him in sharp terms for his stupidity, threatening to have him well horsewhipped when they arrived at her own house, and insisting that he should lash his lazy, good-for-nothing horses, and compel them to go forward.

"Say you so?" cried Timothy, who might be easily propitiated by gentle language, but was rendered instantly intractable by abuse—"By my troggs! I'm not such a lobb and a widgeon as to drive a cockatrice home, that I may earn a horse-whipping for my fare"—at which words he drew a couple of horse-cloths from the boot, spread them carefully over his cattle, tied a handkerchief round his own head, sate himself down upon the foot board, leant back against the box, and seemed composing himself very deliberately for sleep. "Why, you old drunkard," exclaimed her ladyship, lowering the front glass about an inch to make herself heard, and shuddering back as she felt the cold air—"What are you about? We are not going to pass the night here."

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"I am, for one," said Timothy; "but if you don't like your bed-room, my lady, I can let you out."

"Let me out, fellow! What! with my rheumatism, and my liver complaint, and my poor delicate nervous—Eugh! it would be the death of me."

"Like enough, like enough; it's all one to old Timothy." And so indeed it seemed, for he drew his coat about him, adjusted his head comfortably, and appeared already to be dosing. Incensed at his insolence, as well as by the air of composure with which he was nestling himself off to sleep, Lady Crockatt commanded him to drive on in still more peremptory and abusive terms, threatening that he should run the gauntlet through all her servants first, and the horsepond afterwards, if he did not instantly obey her; to all which angry menaces she obtained no other reply than an indistinct and sleepy muttering of—"Ah! that's always the way with you women; you make such a cursed cackling that you won't let a poor fellow have a nap, if he's ever so

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drowsy. There you go again, click clack! click clack! but it's all one to old Timothy: all one to old Timothy. Why can't you hold your tongue, and let"————the remainder of the sentence was lost in a succession of low murmurs, and a loud snore presently afterwards attested that he had settled himself for the night, or that he was at all events deaf for the present to the voice of either revilings or entreaties. At this ominous sound her ladyship losing all patience, vented an angry invective against the selfishness and inhumanity of the whole world, and of the odious, insolent coachman in particular, and finally burst into a passion of tears.

Timothy's slumbers, however, were not so sound as she had anticipated. A heavy rain disturbed without completely awakening him, in which half-sleeping state he crawled down from the foot-board, and opened the carriage door. "Good heavens!" exclaimed her ladyship with a scream—"What is the horrid fellow about? I am not going to get out here."



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"Like enough, like enough," muttered Timothy, drowsily; "but I am going to get in. Not such a lobb as to get soaked through on the box, when there 's a snug birth inside." At these words he began floundering into the carriage, when Lady Crockatt, forgetting, in the real terror of the moment, her whole catalogue of imaginary ailments, snatched up the corpulent and wheezing Cynthia by her side, opened the opposite door, scrambled out into the rain and mud, waded across the ploughed field, and guided by a lucky gleam of moonlight, was enabled to reach a neighbouring lodge, where she obtained shelter for the remainder of the night.

Mrs. Chatsworth, who had accompanied her to the Rookery, no sooner saw Goldingham approaching, than she took her Ladyship by the hand, and leading her up to him, exclaimed with a malicious smile, "Allow me to present to you Lady Crockatt, on her arrival from Farmer Colson's ploughed field; but last, I believe, from Sir Harry Hilgrove's lodge."

"Hey, whoop!" roared the Squire; "stole

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away! slunk to earth! gave us the slip! Sink me! my lady, but you soon took to cover, t'other night; we were all at fault—all thrown out. Ah! the she-foxes are always the most cunning."

"But you arrived safe in the ploughed field at last," said Mrs. Chatsworth; "which, in such a heavy rain, must have made it pleasant soft walking for the rest of your excursion."

"Oh, vastly pleasant, no doubt, to be brought to death's door with the rheumatism," cried her Ladyship, in an angry and upbraiding tone; "to be obliged to get out of the carriage on such a shocking night; and with my poor Cynthia in my arms (you know what a weight dear Cynthia is), to cross an odious field of mud, in a pair of thin satin shoes, both of which I left in the clay in the first six steps; and in less than half a dozen more, I stuck so fast in the mire, that I could not extricate my left leg without putting down poor Cynthia, who first bit my arm, and then kept an incessant howling in my face; while that horrid wretch of a coachman pretended to be snoring inside the carriage,

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though I verily believe he was sniggering all the while at my distress. Eugh, it will be the death of me !"

Instead of apologizing to Goldingham for the liberty she had taken with his carriage, she now commenced a furious abuse of Timothy, expressing her hope that he had been discharged the next morning from his situation.

" If your Ladyship can forgive yourself for your conduct upon that occasion," said Goldingham, with a somewhat stern look, " I really see no good reason why I should not pardon poor Timothy; especially as I believe he was so drowsy, from the ale he had been taking, as scarcely to know what he was about."

" Oh, but the selfishness he evinced, a vice which I hold in such particular abomination ! I don't know where we are to look for sympathy and commiseration. That brute, Sir Carrol Crockatt, made sport of me when I got home, more dead than alive; and my present auditors, methinks, might have at least concealed their laughter, if they could not feel any compassion, when I related my misadventure. Ah !

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my dear Sir Ambrose Jessop, I am glad you have joined us. You have a feeling heart; you can compassionate my unhappy case; you will be indignant, I am sure, at the horrid treatment I have received, though some people allow their coachmen to insult personages of distinction with impunity."

Sir Ambrose made a profound and formal bow to her Ladyship first, to each individual of the party afterwards, and was beginning a set speech to Goldingham, regretting that his grounds should have received so much damage at the time the invaders carried off his brass cannon, when Lady Crockatt, who could not bear to listen to any body's misfortunes or troubles but her own, seized the end of Sir Ambrose's tie-wig, which was carefully drawn through a gold-edged button-hole, and having thus prevented his escape, began a recapitulation of her woeful adventure and scandalous maltreatment on the night of the Duke's landing.

Annoyed at this tedious *Da Capo*, and determined to break it off, the Squire, who had

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been holding all the while a basket in his hand, exclaimed—" Harkee, Sir Ambrose, you asked me, t'other day, for a Bellonia spaniel—one of the right sort—black mouth and muzzle, bushy tail, small round feet, straight legs, deep chest, white coat, liver-coloured spots, brown shag ears."

" Precisely the kind of creature I am commissioned to procure for Lady Laura Lovell, who wants it to match a four-footed friend that she has already got," said Sir Ambrose.

" Whoop! then your business is done. I have a beauty in this basket, and if he suits you, you are perfectly welcome to him."

" My dear Sir," said Sir Ambrose, gently disengaging himself from her ladyship's grasp, " you have not only done me a singular service, but conferred upon me a favour which I feel most fervently. Permit me to examine your precious present." So saying, he stooped down with a look of expectation, and gently opened the lid, when a large badger sprung out, and snapped at his hand, and Sir Ambrose not knowing, in the first impulse of his surprise and

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terror, what sort of a wild beast it was, took suddenly to his heels, followed by the scared animal, dragging after it the basket, to which it had been attached by a string. The Squire pursuing the fugitives across the bowling-green as fast as his convulsions of laughter would permit him, presently recaptured the badger, and returned with it to Lady Crockatt, who exclaimed with a scream—"Oh! the horrid, ugly creature. I protest it's just like Sir Carrol: pray put it to death instantly. It has almost frightened me into hysterics. My drops, my drops!"

By this time Sir Ambrose returned, pale with dismay, and out of breath with his flight, and yet endeavouring to assume an air of dignity and composure, as he said, bowing and panting, "Mr. Hartfield, I am particularly proud to call you my friend, but you must allow me to say, that such practical jokes are neither pleasant nor profitable. I am neither a foe to frolic nor a hater of hilarity; but really, thus to let an animal fly at me, whose baneful bite——"

"Buzz! Sir Ambrose, do you fancy he has

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got some of the wild Irish in his mouth, whom you were so afraid of on the night of the landing? Look at him, man; he couldn't draw blood from a blind puppy. I have broken every one of his teeth before I turn him out as a trail for some young hounds that I am going to enter. Nay, man, why do'st look so glum? Out of humour because I beat you at shuffleboard? Whoop! you mustn't mind a frolic, for, sink me! if I could help it, I 'm in such rare spirits this morning. Hey, yoicks! tantivi! tally-ho! here comes Chervil with the dogs. Curse that young hound, was there ever such an awkward whelp? Look at his legs, 'sblood! the fellow's out at elbows;—he 'll never stoop to a scent, know a rate, stop easily, or become handy: and yonder couple, I fear, will be little better than babblers or skirters. Send back old Trimbush, Chervil; he 'll never be a staunch stag-hound again, since you suffered him to stoop to a hare. Hey boys, hey! hark forward! hark forward!" Taking no further notice of his visitants he hastened away, in order to head the dogs with his trail-badger, while his sten-

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torian voice was heard shouting an old catalogue of a pack of hounds, whose names he had applied to the numerous whelps that were following him:—

"Singwell and Merryboy, Captain and Cryer,
Gangwell and Ginglebell, Fairmaid and Fryer,
Beauty and Bonnylass, Tanner and Trouncer,
Foamer and Forrester, Bonner and Bouncer,
Gander and Gandamore, Jowler and Jumper,
Tarquin and Tamberlane, Thunder and Thumper."

The conversation of the party he had left behind, now turned to that which formed the predominant subject of interest at the time—the progress of the insurrection; and Goldingham having collected all the latest news and rumours of the day, returned home in a most disconsolate frame of mind, when he adverted to the probable fate of Reuben.

A few days after the battle of Sedgemoor, when the country was beginning, in some degree, to recover its tranquillity, the Squire invited a large party to play a grand match of bowls at the Rookery for a round sum, and to dine with him afterwards. On the morning in question he sallied forth with his fowling-piece

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at an early hour, as was now become his wont, for the purpose of shooting the rooks, which pertinacious visitants, although their nests had been destroyed, continued to haunt the denuded premises, obstinately perching upon the stumps of the trees, or the chimney-tops, appearing loth to quit the old mansion to which they had been accustomed from the time they first quitted the shell. To the Squire's apprehensions, irritated and rendered morbid by excess and vexation, there was something ominous in their croaking, which he imagined to become louder and more angry whenever he drew near to them, as if they were reproaching him for the demolition of a colony that had flourished amid the lofty boughs for ages.

Their harsh upbraidings were the more annoying, because they recalled to his mind the destruction that he was rapidly entailing upon his ancient family, who might probably, like these feathered dependents, be soon ejected from their venerable dwelling-place, through his own waste and misconduct. Upon this point he was ever more keenly sensitive than

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could have been surmised from his rugged, reckless nature; and conceiving a grudge against the inauspicious flock that awakened such painful associations, he waged a war of extermination against them. A sportsman from his earliest youth, it was an unusual occurrence for him to miss a bird, and yet, somehow or other, he often failed in bringing down these unwelcome mementos, who still hovered about the nestless Rookery, as if to taunt it with the unappropriateness of its name. He was exasperated at shooting so badly; the croakings of the retiring birds seemed to have something sinister in the sound; and the stumps of the trees as he wandered among them, were not by any means calculated to sooth his angry feelings. In vain did he leap over them to prove his activity and indifference, and whistle, and shout out remnants of bacchanalian songs, and recall old Lord Carnarvon's saying, that "wood was an excrescence of the earth, provided by Heaven for the payment of debts." He could not thus easily banish from his mind all the pleasant recollections of his youth; he felt that

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he was moving among the ghosts of happier days. Every tree was individualized and distinctly pictured upon his memory. One he remembered to have climbed when a boy, for a woodpecker's nest; another in pursuit of a squirrel. A third had supported his target when he first shot an arrow into the clout; from a fourth a large bough had fallen, and frightened his pony when he was riding; a fifth had held the swing from which Emily fell; and on a bench beneath a sixth, he had sate with his father only three days before he died. Not a stump did he pass that was not fraught with similar reminiscences; and the remorse that smote him when he contrasted his present with his former feelings and prospects, was not the less poignant, because he struggled with it, and strove to smother it beneath a forced and boisterous merriment. Few would have given him credit for compunctious visitings of any sort, and none, except perhaps his sister Emily, suspected that his fits of rampant and drunken hilarity were but a desperate effort to drown these importunate and stinging self-reproaches.

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Anxious to seek society, that he might escape from himself, he quitted the grounds, and hastened towards the house, where he had the pleasure to find that several of the expected visitants had already arrived. Enough were soon assembled to commence the bowling-match, in which, however, the Squire took no part at first, though he made heavy bets, placing himself in an alcove that overlooked the game, where he solaced himself with a pipe and bottle of claret, to prepare himself, as he said, for the more unflinching potations at dinner-time. Emily walked up and down the green, occasionally stopping to look at the bowlers, or chatter with Sir Ambrose Jessop, though she willingly abandoned both when Sir Harcourt Slingsby was seen to swim towards her in all the rich and exquisite elegance of his elaborate appointments, affably and gracefully congeeing on all sides as he advanced, and appearing to bring with him an appropriate atmosphere of perfumes, courtesy, smiles, gaiety, fashion, urbanity, comeliness, and all that was consummately polished, delectable, and debonair.

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"They taste of death that do at heaven arrive,
But we *this* Paradise approach alive;"

he exclaimed, bowing complacently to Emily as he reached her; "I thank my friend Sir George Etherege for putting these words into the mouth of Dorimant, for they have furnished me with a most appropriate greeting at all times, and never more so than upon the present occasion." As he walked by her side, conversing and bending his head, the ends of his glorious periwig swang occasionally forward, cloying the air with their rich odours; his flat silk hat, never suffered to scare with its shadow a single wave of his delicate peruque, was carried beneath his left arm; his frill and ruffles of right point lace fluttered in the breeze; his cravat, disposed with a studied inimitable nonchalance, worthy of the artist he had imported for that purpose, was edged with the rarest and most superb Brussels; his sword-knot, ribbons, and embroidery, were all in the same finished and costly taste. From the wrist of his left hand, which carried an agate snuff-box, studded with rubies, depended a clouded cane, whose inlaid

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top was hidden by the gay silk tassels of the ribbon by which it hung; while from his right he had drawn off the fringed and scented glove, apparently for the purpose of taking snuff, but in reality to display the rare jewels upon his fingers, which flashed in the sun as he waved his fair hand backwards and forwards, while discoursing in his promenade. Behind him, at a respectful distance, walked his page to receive his orders, or inform him of any accidental derangement that might be discovered in his garniture or appointments.

From the motive that has been already explained, the Squire had thrown Sir Harcourt as much as possible into the society of his sister, without any visible success, however, so far as the Baronet was concerned, although his appearance, deportment, and conversation, had not failed to make a deep impression upon Emily. Her brother's dissolute habits had prevented her accompanying him in his excursions to London, so that her manners, though not inelegant, betrayed that want of polish which generally characterised even the better classes

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in the country, at a period when a communication with the capital, and a consequent intercourse with its refinements and fashions, were so much more restricted than at present. This slight air of rusticity, however, was more than redeemed by a fund of modesty and good sense, combined with a depth of feeling, in which she seemed to share her brother's impetuous temperament, unprofaned by any of his accompanying faults or vices. In her utter ignorance of the *beau monde*, she had formed all her conceptions of the finished fine gentleman of the court, from books and plays; and Sir Harcourt Slingsby seemed not less eminently to eclipse these embodyings of her reading, than he did the boors and fox-hunters of her familiar observation. Beneath all his coxcombry and affected phrases, she had discovered so many evidences of a superior head and heart, especially when by having no object for displaying his assumed, or at least his habitual character, he suffered his real one the more freely to escape, that she really knew not whether to consider him most of a fop or a philosopher. For the

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purpose of clearing up her doubts upon this point, she ventured to express her surprise, while they were pacing up and down the bowling-green, that any person qualified to attain eminence in other ways, should devote his time, fortune, and attention to the fluctuations of fashion, and such frivolous distinctions as were merely external.

"What is a man to do," said Sir Harcourt, with an appealing shrug of the shoulders, and extension of the hands, "who has six thousand pounds, and three hundred and sixty-five days and nights to dispose of every year of his existence? To take myself as an instance. May I grow fat! Madam, and spread, if I see what alternative is left to me between my present mode of life and utter indolence, which by generating *ennui* would ruin my spirits, and what is still worse—my looks. To attempt a profession, wealthy as I am, were but to worry myself unnecessarily if I fail, and to rob needy talent and industry if I succeed. I might indeed mingle in that fierce war of parties which is the current trade of the aristocracy, but I should as soon



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think of leaping into the ring at Paris Garden, and fighting with Dove the famous bear, as of descending into the political arena, where all the angry feelings of mankind are pitted against each other. A complete gentleman, according to Sir Fopling Flutter, ought to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a genius for love letters, an agreeable voice for a chamber, to be very amorous, something discreet, and not very constant. At all these accomplishments I have not the presumption to aim, but I would so far attain the character of a man of the mode, as to withdraw myself from all the hateful passions and pursuits of my fellow-creatures, that I may mingle as exclusively as possible in all their gaieties and pleasures."

"A very pleasant notion if it could but be reduced to practice," said Emily.

"And why not? May I lose my whitest front tooth! Madam," resumed Sir Harcourt, who from habit could not lay aside his ridiculous phrases, even when he was disposed to talk seriously, "if any thing can be more simple; I refuse to take cognisance of my neighbours by

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any of their mutual provocatives to bitterness and hatred. Whig, Tory, and Trimmer are equally welcome to my festive entertainments; while in my character of a mere man of fashion, caring about no party, I have pleasant access to the houses of all, and do my best to diffuse cheerfulness, good-humour, and gaiety around me. Out of regard to myself, I am careful not to wound the prejudices of others, for I wish to see none but smiling faces: while to avoid envy I talk nonsense, since sober good sense is quite out of fashion, and it is much better to be set down for a coxcomb than a prig or a vulgarian. In short, Madam, *vive la bagatelle!* is my motto, which I cannot more strictly observe than when I am considering how I myself, the greatest trifler about town, may live the most gaily and happily."

"But surely, Sir Harcourt, there is some degradation in enacting this character, when you feel yourself competent to support a superior one."

"May I cease to be original in my oaths, Madam, if I think so. Brutus played the fool



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for the happiness of his country; I do it for my own, and to throw off a tyranny worse than that of the Tarquins—the tyranny of sordid pursuits, angry feelings, and hateful prejudices. The wise can only fancy themselves happy in a certain society; the coxcomb is wiser still, for he enjoys all, and even finds a pleasure in his own."

"As a matter of calculation you may be right," said Emily; "but are you not subjecting yourself to an imputation of selfishness, or at least of vanity, in thus becoming, as it were, your own idol?"

"If I do not show that I value myself, how shall I expect others to do it? The love that we feel for ourselves is at least a happy one, unexposed to the assaults of jealousy, the fear of rivals, and even the effects of time and inconstancy. True, some new Rosalind might think herself justified in saying to me—'You are rather point device in your accoutrements as loving yourself, than seeming the lover of any other;' but she would be wrong. It is because I love the whole sex that I endeavour to make myself agreeable to them. My life is a general

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courtship, and I endeavour to adapt my dress to my life. Believe me, Madam, it well deserves all the time and cost I bestow upon it; for it is my Mentor and Minerva. When I am disposed to forget myself, these rare and costly tappings remind me that I am a gentleman, that I must act up to the character I have assumed, that I must not disgrace my garniture, nor dishonour the sword I wear. No clergyman can respect his cloth more sacredly than I do my embroideries."

"Then you must accept it as a compliment,' said Emily smiling, "when I express my sincere conviction that you are worthy of each other. In this point of view the boundless expense of your decorations, which are ever new, and ever equally elegant, is not perhaps so great a waste as I had imagined."

"If I do not benefit myself I at least serve others by the vanity and profusion of my personal luxuries, for my tradesmen are punctually paid, (the only point in which I am unfashionable,) and my large income still leaves me a surplus for better purposes. Even in my vanities, therefore, however unintentionally, I diffuse a

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certain degree of happiness around me, and I confess that I am rewarded much beyond my merits, for when I survey the wide circle of my acquaintance, I see few so happy as myself.—May I implore of you to cross to the other side of the Green, for the wind wafts towards us the smoke of the Squire's pipe, and if my periwig were to imbibe the smallest odour of tobacco, I must throw aside this *chef d'œuvre* of Chedreux, and defraud him of his immortality."

As Emily's attention was directed by this speech to her brother, who still sat smoking and drinking in the alcove, she could not help contrasting his soiled scarlet frock, his slovenly cravat, dishevelled hair, deer-skin waistcoat, and dirty boots, with the exquisite elegance of Sir Harcourt; while the haggard expression that was rapidly extinguishing his former healthy comeliness, afforded a striking confirmation of her companion's remark, that when he looked around him, he saw few so happy as himself. They passed to a different quarter of the bowling-green, and Emily, anxious still fur-

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ther to draw out the Baronet's sentiments, observed, that reading afforded a resource for his time which he had omitted to notice.

"Wrinkle me, Madam, if I do not read every thing that comes out," said Sir Harcourt; "and I have the honour of knowing most of the poets about town, who annually ease me of a good round number of my broad pieces, in return for their flattering dedications. But alas! our evil passions find their way into books, and the mental epicure can seldom lay one down without wishing that he had never taken it up. History is only a record of crimes, the Newgate Calendar of Kings; theology is a war of opinions about a religion of peace; poetry is tuneful lying; politics are but the fierce snarling of hungry dogs contending for the picking of a bone; and I rise from the perusal of such works with no other satisfaction than that of knowing that I am neither a poet, theologian, nor politician, but a professed man of pleasure, according to my own acceptation of the term; a coxcomb, a fop, a man of the

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mode if you will, according to the acceptation of the world."

"You compared yourself to Brutus—am I then to understand that, like him, you are merely acting a part."

"Madam, I am the heir apparent of the common hangman, if I be not a sincere and genuine coxcomb. What began in affectation has ended in conviction. I am a convert to my dress: I can literally say, that habit has become a second nature with me, and one which, I am vain enough to believe, has in some respects improved upon the first.—Page! keep closer to me, sirrah! the wind is getting up; tell me when it begins to agitate the waves of my peruke."

While he had been thus discoursing, Lady Crockatt, Mrs. Chatsworth, and a Miss Crawley, a humble companion of her Ladyship, and the recipient of her ill-humours, who attended to administer her medicines, listen to her complaints, and assist her to do nothing, entered the bowling-green, and made their way immediately to the alcove where the Squire was seat-

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ed, to which spot Sir Ambrose Jessop, and three or four more were presently summoned, when all appeared to be engaged in a deep and earnest confabulation. Not many minutes elapsed ere Emily was called by her brother to join the party, and apologizing to her companion, was preparing to run across the green. "Hist!" said the Baronet, laying his fore-finger upon his lip in such a manner as to display his ring to advantage. "Remember, we have been upon honour, and in confidence. Not a word of what has passed. If it should transpire that I have been talking sense, I should be degraded from my post; my cap and bells would be torn from my head, and I should lose all the privileges of coxcombry."

Emily laughed, and hastened across to the little assemblage in the alcove, whose conversation we must enable the reader to understand, by informing him that we have now brought him to the morning subsequent to Adeline's misadventure with the fish-poacher, as recorded in the last Chapter. It will be recollected, that Helen had agreed to accompany her at an early



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hour to the summer-house, a purpose which she was prevented from fulfilling by a message from a poor woman in the neighbourhood, one of her pensioners, who had been taken suddenly and alarmingly ill. At the bed-side of this humble sufferer she was detained nearly the whole morning, while Adeline was fidgetting about the house, impatiently waiting her return, and half resolved to seek her own dear darling Arcadius without her. In this interim Lady Crockatt, Miss Crawley, and Mrs. Chatsworth arrived on a visit to the inmates of Harpsden Hall, and seeing the garden gate open, walked in for the purpose of showing the grounds to Miss Crawley, who had never been there before. In their perambulations they chanced to approach the summer-house just as Reuben, hearing a footstep, and presuming it to be his customary visitant, whom he only knew as Miss Trevanian, popped his head through the trap-door, and exclaimed in a whispering voice—"Miss Trevanian! Miss Trevanian! is it you?"—He again concealed himself as soon as he had discovered his mistake, but not before

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Mrs. Chatworth had caught a glimpse of his descending head, although without recognizing him, while the other party had distinctly heard the words, which they very naturally applied to Helen. Here was indeed food for scandal that promised to afford a full and gratifying repast. Mrs. Chatsworth, herself a notorious demirep, was of course proportionably indignant, though she declared she was more hurt than surprized, as from the demure and guarded deportment of Helen, she had always set her down for a bad, sly girl. Miss Crawley wondered who the man could be, and what he could see in such a starched, prim-looking thing; Lady Crockatt called for her salts, protesting that the very thought of such gross improprieties had made her perfectly sick; and all agreed that it was quite impossible to perform their intention of visiting at a house where such abominable proceedings were allowed. They accordingly again quitted the grounds by the garden gate, re-entered her Ladyship's carriage, and driving over to the Rookery, bustled into the bowling-green, open-mouthed, to communicate the im-

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portant discovery they had made, and express their horror at such a flagrant outrage upon all decency and decorum, committed by a young hypocrite who had presumed to set herself up, forsooth, for a pattern and a prude.

Emily had contracted a friendship for Helen Trevanian, which had been fostered rather by the warmth of her feelings than by the lapse of time, into an ardent attachment. Lady Trevanian, as we have already stated, had not been very long settled in the neighbourhood; but Emily, delighted by the placid amiability of her new friend, admiring her talents and accomplishments, edified by her superior good sense, and struck by her scrupulous regard to propriety in every action of her life, had, in that short period, learnt to reverence as deeply as she loved her, until she looked up to her as a model of all that was unassumingly pure, dignified, and delightful in the female character. For some time, therefore, she was really at a loss to understand the drift of the conversation; when, upon her arrival at the alcove, whither the Squire had beckoned her, Mrs.

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Chatworth exclaimed, with a triumphant toss of the head, "So! Miss Hartfield, I have a fine story to tell you about the friend you are always crying up; something marvellous and romantic, so prepare to be astonished, and what's more, it's all true."

"Whoop! you don't often astonish us in that way," cried the Squire. "You have only to add that there's nothing scandalous in the story, and we shall admit that it's marvellous."

"Nay, the company shall judge for themselves," said Mrs. Chatsworth. "I merely mean to relate an occurrence of which Lady Crockatt, Miss Crawley, and myself, were eye or ear-witnesses, leaving others to draw what conclusions they please. I am the last person to judge uncharitably myself, particularly of a young lady, and a demure young lady, and an exemplary young lady, that sets up for superior wisdom, and propriety, and prudery, and all that sort of thing. As to the mother, she has been really too bad; nobody attempts to defend her, quite shocking; cannot, however, help pitying the daughters, poor things, so I call

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now and then, just to chat with them, and afford them a little amusement, for I'm sure they don't get much at home; at least I used to think so, but Miss Trevanian, it seems, has little amours and recreations of her own, which nobody knows any thing about."

"Don't bestow the gentle name of recreations upon such abominable wickedness," cried Lady Crockatt. "Faugh!—my salts, Crawley. What a world we live in! I can't bear to hear it, nor even to think of it. Do pray go on, let them know all."

"If I could but have seen the lover!" exclaimed Miss Crawley, bridling up; "but after all, he must be some low fellow, without an atom of taste, for surely there are handsomer young women in the neighbourhood, though none, perhaps, quite so accommodating as Miss Trevanian."

Emily had coloured deeply at the apparent purport of these insinuations against her friend, but as nothing explicit had yet been stated, she remained in a silent, and almost breathless attention, awaiting a relation of the fact from

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which such uncharitable conclusions had been drawn. When, however, Mrs. Chatworth proceeded to detail what they had seen and heard, and was about to follow up her narrative by some sneering and stinging jibes, Emily's patience could endure no longer; she reddened up to the very top of her forehead, her eyes sparkled, and too much carried away by her feelings to be very guarded as to her expressions, she exclaimed with a passionate energy, "For shame, Madam, for shame! You ought to have known Helen Trevanian better. She is too noble, too pure, too high-souled, to be capable of any thing dishonourable, or even clandestine. I know not, I care not whether this be a mistake, a calumny, or an utter falsehood; but I will swear that Helen is innocent. None that know her will believe a syllable of such a tale; she is not to be judged of like other women."

No allusion to Mrs. Chatsworth was intended by the conclusion of this speech; her conscience, however, making her feel it as a sar-

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casm, she bit her lips, and with an affected calmness that ill agreed with the taunting toss of her head, replied, "I dare say you may have very good reasons, my dear, for vindicating your friend; but you should be taught that the word falsehood is not usually applied by one lady to the assertions of another; and it might become you, my dear, to recollect that Lady Crockatt, and Miss Crawley, can support my testimony, so that we are three to one, my dear Miss Hartfield."

"Were three hundred affidavits brought to me," cried Emily, with increased vehemence, "I would tear them all to pieces, and toss them to the winds, if they impeached Helen's virtue." In the transport of the moment, and without being conscious of the action, she tore her fan into shreds as she spoke, and scattered them in the air.

"You are warm, my dear," said Mrs. Chatsworth, smiling maliciously; "you should have therefore kept your fan to cool your passion. And, after all, if Miss Trevanian chooses to make secret assignations with the man I saw—"

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"How do you know it was a man that you saw?" interrupted Emily; "you only observed—"

"Buzz!" cried the Squire; "we may trust Mrs. Chatsworth for that. Haugh! haugh!"

"Really, Mr. Hartfield, you give your tongue too much liberty—I cannot submit to such insinuations," said Mrs. Chatsworth, bridling up with a prodigious air of indignant virtue.

A rude stare, and another "Haugh! haugh!" were all the answer vouchsafed by the Squire, who, turning to Emily, continued, "Zooks! girl, why dost keep such a coil about the matter? She does but follow her mother's example. When didst ever know a tame bird come out of a wild bird's nest? I had a racing mare, black Bess, that bolted out of the course at Honiton meeting, and sink me! if her colt, the bay filly with the star forehead, didn't serve me the self-same trick at Dorchester, and lost me the silver cup."

"I have a real regard for Miss Trevanian," observed Sir Ambrose Jessop, "but when we have the ocular and auricular testimony of three ladies, for all of whom I have a not less rooted

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respect, it is not only hard to imagine, but difficult to believe, and impossible to fancy that —hem! I say it is not only hard to imagine— haw!"

"Sink me! Sir Ambrose," said the Squire, "you're thrown out, at fault, lost the scent, come to a ploughed field; the remainder of your speech has bolted out of the course like my bay colt. Haugh, haugh, haugh!"

"I, too, have a real regard for Miss Trevanian," resumed Mrs. Chatsworth, addressing herself to Emily, "but facts, you know, my dear, are facts."

"Madam, I am the twin brother of a mole-catcher," said Sir Harcourt Slingsby, who had now joined the assemblage, and had overheard the latter part of the conversation; "if I think you acted like the young lady's friend, in thus giving publicity to the occurrence, instead of previously stating it to Miss Trevanian, who might, perhaps, have explained it to your satisfaction."

"She might, she would have done it—she

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shall now explain it," exclaimed Emily with vehemence: "these ladies have thrown a slur, a foul stigma, upon her honour. I will have no excuse, either for covert slander, or open calumny; no, not even for significant shrugs of the shoulder, or insidious exclamations of 'Poor thing!' when her name is mentioned. The reparation shall be as public as the wrong, and I insist upon it, that these ladies accompany me back to Harpsden Hall, that the matter may be immediately cleared up to the satisfaction of all parties."

"Whoop! Emy; have a care, have a care!" cried the Squire, "don't beat the bushes if you wish the fox to remain unfound. If your friend should be caught tripping, she'll not thank you for assisting Mrs. Chatsworth to prove her statement."

"The character of Helen Trevanian," replied Emily, proudly, "like the snow, will become the purer and the more unspotted, the more it is blown upon."

"Sink me! Emy, if you shall go now," re-

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sumed the Squire, taking hold of her arm. "Our party is all assembled, and we shall want you presently at the dinner-table."

"I will have nothing to do with either parties or dinners till my friend is vindicated from this assertion," said Emily, struggling angrily until she had disengaged herself. "Ladies, are you willing to accompany me?"

"Oh, let us oblige her, by all means," cried Mrs. Chatsworth, who anticipated a new triumph for her malice, by an exposure of Helen, while she was not less curious to ascertain who was her concealed lover.

"Really, Miss Hartfield, your loud voice has so shocked my nerves," said Lady Crockatt—"Eugh! what a twinge in my side!—but my carriage is waiting, and I am ready to drive back to Harpsden Hall, since you make such a point of it. We only left it as we did, out of delicacy to the unfortunate young woman. Give me my drops, Crawley."

"I am *so* glad your Ladyship is going back," exclaimed the latter, "we shall thus find out,

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at all events, whom she has picked up for her sweetheart."

The party now made their way to the carriage, Emily still talking loudly and angrily in spite of her Ladyship's delicate nerves; while the Squire, apprehensive that her vehemence and passion might have made an unfavourable impression upon Sir Harcourt, took occasion to observe, that she was as generous and warm-hearted a girl as ever breathed, but that it was a pity she had never visited London or the Court, that she might learn to curb her feelings, and not be quite so hot in temper, or hard in the mouth.

"May I be pitted with the small-pox! if I do not like her better as she is," replied Sir Harcourt. "Had she been a Court damsel, she would have learnt the exposure of her friend with an open or concealed triumph; she would have admitted that there was too much reason to believe her guilty; and had the inculpated nymph been also a disciple of the Court, she would probably have been jus-

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tified in making the admission. Your sister is worthy to have a friend, and I hope Miss Trevanian will prove herself worthy of her generous defender. Sir Ambrose, suffer me to kiss thy best cheek! for let me blood if thy new wig be not *piquant* and *degagé;* its expression is that of perfect suavity and blandness; thy sword-knot is urbane and jaunty; while the garniture of thy waistcoat is altogether dainty, imaginative, and debonair. Excuse me, your *point de Venise* frill should fall on this side, or it conceals an embroidering that does honour to your taste by its amenity."

During the occurrence of this scene at the Rookery, Adeline, losing all patience at the protracted absence of Helen, could no longer deny herself the consolation of paying a visit to her dear darling Arcadius, in the summer-house; where she learnt, with infinite dismay, that Reuben considered his retreat to have been discovered. He had distinctly recognized Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, though he felt confident, from his own instant disappearance, that they could have seen nothing

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more of him than his hat. This however, he was well aware, was quite sufficient to excite suspicion, and lead, in all probability, to his apprehension; for he never dreamt of being taken for a concealed lover. In the anticipation that he would assuredly be betrayed to destruction by the gossiping females who had so unluckily obtained a glimpse of him, he would have made an instant escape; but it chanced that Captain Trevanian, having been ordered across the country with a troop of horse, had called at Harpsden Hall to visit his family; and Reuben, upon peeping through the wood-house door, saw the soldiers so dispersed about the front of the building and the skirts of the road, that to attempt a flight at that moment would infallibly ensure his seizure.

While they were in deep and anxious consultation how he might best secure himself from the perils that were now closely environing him about, Adeline saw, from the summer-house window, Lady Crockatt's carriage again driving up towards the house, and instantly concluded that she had either returned to give information

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to the soldiers, or that she had brought officers in the coach for the purpose of arresting her lover. Overcome by the imminence of the danger, she uttered two or three French exclamations, and appeared in some danger of fainting; but presently recovering herself, she whispered in an agitated manner, "Quick! quick! follow me. I can perhaps conceal you in the house."

Reuben grasped his pistols with the intention, in the first instance, of making a bold push for his escape, hopeless as it seemed in the immediate presence of a troop of horse; but recollecting that his seizure at the present moment might compromise Adeline, and perhaps implicate her family, while there was a chance of avoiding these consequences if he could only remain secreted till night-fall, he concealed his weapons under his cloak, and signified to his fair companion, with a sort of desperate resignation, that she might dispose of him as she thought fit. Followed by Reuben, she accordingly hurried along the evergreen walk, which, skirting the large piece of water, reached nearly up to the back entrance of the mansion, and was

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enabled to gain the gate unobserved. Nearly all the servants had betaken themselves to the front of the house to gaze at the soldiers, so that the fugitives, without encountering a soul, began mounting the back stairs, it being Adeline's intention to conceal her companion in one of the unoccupied garrets. The sound of voices and descending footsteps, however, suddenly compelling her to abandon her purpose, she darted across a narrow passage into a wide corridor, turned into Helen's painting-room, ushered Reuben into a light closet at the further end, where her sister kept her colours and the implements of her art, bade him lock the door on the inside, and telling him she would presently return to conduct him to a better hiding place, hurried down stairs again to await the return of Helen, and consult with her what was best to be done in this most agitating crisis.

On the arrival of Lady Crockatt's carriage at the gate of Harpsden Hall, Emily suggested that to avoid giving any unnecessary pain to Lady Trevanian, especially as her son the



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Captain, and two of his brother officers, were understood to be in the drawing-room, it might be advisable to betake themselves to the painting-room, where they might perhaps find Helen, and whither she might at all events be summoned to enter upon an eclaircissement of the mysterious apparition, and the words reported to have been uttered in the summer-house. To this proposition her companions willingly assented, and they accordingly proceeded to the room in question, Lady Crockatt taking the lead, when Reuben, unused to these hide-and-seek emergencies, tapped gently with his knuckle against the door, exclaiming at the same time in a whisper, "Miss Trevanian! Miss Trevanian! is the coast clear? can I make my escape now?"

"I will swear that this is the same voice we heard in the summer-house!" cried Mrs. Chatsworth, while her face flared up with a malicious joy. "Better and better;—concealed now in the closet of her own painting-room! Well, my dear Miss Hartfield, what say you to this?"

"My salts! my salts! what will the world

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come to next—was there ever——Eugh! my heart-burn—" ejacuated Lady Crockatt; while Miss Crawley, lifting up her hands, eyes, and shoulders, all at once, pronounced with regularly increasing emphasis the words—"Horrid! shocking! abominable! scandalous! beastly!"

With a face of crimson, and staring eyes, Emily had stood for a few seconds transfixed and aghast; but suddenly recollecting herself, she cried out in a loud and passionate voice, "This is some worse than Popish plot, some damnable and deep-laid conspiracy to ruin Helen. This fellow may be some sorry scoundrel who has been hired to assassinate her character; but I will drag him out, and expose his infamy; I will tear him from his hiding place; be he the devil himself he shall show his face, and confess his falsehood."——She grasped the handle of the closet door as she spoke, and finding it locked, shook it violently, every vein of her reddened face swelling with indignant passion, as she cried in a still louder tone—"Come forth, thou villain! come forth



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thou traitor! thou pestilent defamer of the innocent, come forth! Thou slanderer, thou liar, thou base, lurking assassin! come forth, or by Heaven, I will raise the house, and have the door battered from its hinges."

At this juncture Helen, having returned to the house, had learnt in a hurried communication with Adeline that Reuben was concealed in her closet, that he was provided with loaded pistols, that Captain Trevanian was in the drawing-room, and that she had just caught a glimpse of a party of ladies, whom she supposed to be Lady Crockatt and some of her friends, as they entered the painting-room, though she could not possibly divine their motive for not being regularly announced by the servants. All the complicated dangers of this terrible crisis, and the tragical results it might occasion, flashed at once upon Helen's mind; the blood mounted to her cheeks, and her countenance exhibited an expression of anxiety and distress; but without losing her self-possession she only paused to exclaim, "O Adeline! Adeline! to what have you

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exposed me!" and immediately hurried towards the painting-room. Catching the loud and angry voice of her friend as she advanced, she ran forward, rushed into the apartment, disengaged the hand that was still violently shaking the door, planted herself against it, and exclaimed with an appealing earnestness, and a look of eager agitation, "For the love of Heaven, Emily, forbear! Be silent, I conjure you, I implore you! Nobody shall enter this closet. The consequences of a discovery at the present moment might be fatal."

"Then there *is* a discovery to be made—there *is* a man secreted in the closet, and you are privy to his concealment!" ejaculated Emily. The indignation which had hitherto braced her voice and feelings refused any longer to support her, she burst into tears, and sobbed out in broken accents, "O Helen, Helen Trevanian! I could not have believed this possible!"

"Well, my dear, is this enough for you? Are you satisfied now?" inquired Mrs. Chatsworth tauntingly.

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"Emily! I did not expect this from you," resumed Helen, with an expression of wounded, though calm and even dignified virtue. "You have not known me long, but you ought to have understood me better. I am incapable of a falsehood, and I demand of you, not as a favour, but as a right resulting from our mutual friendship, implicitly to believe my solemn assurance, when I declare to you that I have never even seen the person who is now in this closet."

The nobleness, sincerity, and truth, stamped upon her brow as she uttered this appeal; carried such an instant conviction of her innocence to the very innermost heart of Emily, that she grasped her hand and pressed it affectionately to her bosom, exclaiming with a passionate energy, "Forgive me—O, forgive me, my pure and noble-minded friend! If I distrusted you for a single moment, it was only because I had forgotten myself. I do, I do believe you innocent. Believe it? I know it—I feel it—I will swear to it—I will stake my life—my soul—upon it!"

"What impudence! what depravity! Faugh!

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it really makes one sick," said Lady Crockatt, smelling to her salts. "How should she know there was a fellow in the closet? Who hid him there? In her own room, too!"

"Why, really it is exacting a *leetle* too much from one's gullibility, however accommodating we may wish to make it," added Mrs. Chatsworth.

"It is strange—mysterious—inexplicable," said Emily; "but Helen Trevanian has said the word, and I receive it as a gospel truth."

"As for these ladies who know me less intimately," resumed Helen, with a proud composure, "I must be content for the present to lie under their uncharitable conclusions; but I do implore of them, as they would avert a catastrophe which they themselves would have eternal reason to regret, not to divulge in this house what they have seen, not even to open their lips upon this subject in the neighbourhood; pledging to them my most sacred honour that when I can do so, without endangering the lives of my fellow-creatures, I will explain

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to them every circumstance that may have excited their suspicion, not less, I trust, to their own satisfaction, than to my own perfect exculpation."

"I am perfectly satisfied already," said Lady Crockatt; "but I have no kind of wish to create a fracas, especially as you talk of blood, which always makes me sick. For my part I shall say nothing till I have your authority, for I hate tattlers."

"So do I, my Lady," cried Mrs. Chatsworth tartly, as if the latter words had been an innuendo levelled against herself. "We are all upon honour," she continued with a sneer; "even Miss Trevanian has pledged hers, though I wonder where she got it; for I really thought it was in the keeping of the gentleman in the closet. Your Ladyship will answer for Miss Crawley, of course."

"I can answer for myself, Madam," cried the latter, with an angry toss of the head.

"It is a solemn compact then," said Emily; "and may the curse of perpetual dumbness

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fall upon the tongue that is first base enough to violate it!" So saying, she conducted the party down stairs; they remounted the carriage, and again drove away from Harpsden Hall, without having seen either Lady Trevanian or the Captain.



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## CHAPTER II.

Faint Amorist! what, dost thou think
To taste love's honey, and not drink
One dram of gall?—or to devour
A world of sweet, and taste no sour?
Dost thou ever think to enter
Th' Elysian fields, that dar'st not venture
In Charon's barge? A lover's mind
Must use to sail with every wind.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

AFTER having waited a few minutes to compose her feelings, Helen betook herself to the drawing-room to welcome her brother, whose youthful impetuosity would have infallibly hurried him into some intemperate action that might have been fatal to both parties, had he been brought into collision with Reuben, armed as the latter was, and desperately determined

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not to be taken alive. Her foresight of this danger had dictated Helen's recent conduct, and still filled her bosom with anxiety, though she now exhibited such a perfect self-possession, that not even the keenest observer would have suspected any thing had recently occurred to disturb the placid, ordinary current of her feelings. It was far otherwise with Adeline, whose attempts to conceal her confusion by a forced, giggling, and affected nonchalance, would have suggested the idea that she was playing a part, and had something to hide; but that the general oddity and flightiness of her demeanour were too well known to entail any particular observation upon that which was conceived to be nothing more than the whim of the moment. From the conversation of their brother, the chances of escape for any of the concealed rebels seemed to be forlorn, and almost hopeless. Spies and scouts he stated to be thickly planted in every direction; while the shore and sea, all along that part of the coast, were strictly invested by patrolling parties, and armed skiffs or shallops, which had already arrested several of the better

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sort, for whose heads he declared he would not give a pinch of snuff, since it was well known that the vengeance of the King would be specially directed against the officers and gentry. Although this information left them more at a loss than ever how to dispose of Reuben without ensuring his certain destruction, both sisters were relieved from a portion of their anxiety when the Captain and his troopers took themselves off, for any thing seemed preferable to a discovery and fracas in their own house, and the hope of safety and concealment to all parties was at least fortified for the present by the disappearance of the soldiers.

Helen, however, was well aware that this was only a momentary respite for their unfortunate protegé. She knew Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth too well to imagine that they would observe their pledge for any protracted period, even if they did not instantly violate it. Besides, they were under no promise of secrecy as to what they had seen and heard in the summer-house; and a whisper, a hint, a gesture, might be sufficient to direct attention to the spot, and

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occasion a discovery. On Reuben's account, therefore,—on her own—but more especially on Adeline's, whose blind, romantic passion appeared to gather force from its obvious absurdity under the present circumstances, and to be stimulated into enthusiasm by the hourly increasing dangers of its object, she became convinced that their inmate ought not to be suffered to remain another day within the precincts of Harpsden Hall. Every thing might be lost, nothing could be gained by delay, and she resolved to seek an interview with him at once, to point out to him the predicament in which he stood, to suggest to him whatever precautions might increase the chance of his escape, and to request that he would withdraw himself forthwith, and seek some more secure asylum until he could accomplish his flight beyond sea. She accordingly summoned Adeline, communicated what had passed in the painting-room, and requested that she would accompany her to the closet, for the purpose of dismissing their visitant.

Reuben, in the meanwhile, remained in his narrow sanctuary, a prey to contradictory emo-

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tions that were at once grateful and distressing. The conversation which he had overheard had filled him with the most exalted notions of Helen's magnanimity in sacrificing her own most cherished feelings, and even her good fame with the world, to her generous protection of an utter stranger; while her affectionate devotedness to her sister, when by the utterance of a single word she might have transferred from herself to Adeline all the supposed criminality attached to his concealment, rendered it doubtful whether she had conferred upon her, or upon himself, the more important and inappreciable service. He was equally at a loss whether most to admire the noble-minded heroism of her conduct, or the gentle, feminine, and yet resolute calmness of her deportment, of which he had formed his opinion, without the testimony of his eyes, from the sweetness of her voice, attuned to a singular accordance with the mildness and benignity of her sentiments. In proportion, however, as it delighted him to think that a high-born female, who united such grandeur of soul to so much suavity of temperament, should have

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voluntarily constituted herself his protectress and preserver, it humiliated, it stung him, to reflect that he might be the means of entailing defamation, danger, and unhappiness upon the highly-gifted being who had treated him with such unexampled generosity. Bitterly did he regret that he had not sooner withdrawn himself from the premises, and though he was sensible that his doing so now would not exonerate his benefactress from the unworthy suspicions to which an unfortunate combination of circumstances had subjected her, he determined to fly from the house at all hazards, lest she should become more deeply, and perhaps irretrievably compromised by his presence.

Just as he had formed this resolution the sisters tapped gently at the door of the closet, and requested that he would join them in the painting-room, a summons which was of course instantly obeyed. All fright and flutter, horror and heroics, Adeline apostrophized the fates, both in French and English, declaring that the arrival of Lady Crockatt and her companions was *un contre-tems inoui*, that the treatment her

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sister had experienced was *de la dernière infamie*, and that she herself was *desesperée, on ne peut plus;* but without offering a single suggestion that might relieve them from their own difficulties, or facilitate the escape of their companion. Reuben seized the first opportunity her empty volubility afforded to address himself to her sister, expressing, in the most emphatic terms, admiration of her magnanimity, gratitude for his preservation, and anguish that her generous interference should have exposed her to such unmerited insult. His language was eloquent, and his eyes, as he intently fixed them upon the fine, placid, and intellectual features of his protectress, were more eloquent still; for high as had been his anticipations, they fell infinitely short of the beautiful reality now presented to his gaze.

Blushing slightly at the impassioned earnestness of his regard, but without the smallest hesitation or embarrassment in her manner, Helen disclaimed for herself and her sister any peculiar merit in what they had done, declaring, that she should have felt herself bound to extend the

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same protection to any other fellow-creature who might in the same manner have placed his life in her hands, though she did not affect to conceal her regret at the delicate predicament in which it had placed her, or deny the painfully humiliating consequences to which it might lead. She then briefly but clearly stated the considerations which imperatively dictated his immediate departure, and repeating to him the information she had received as to the difficulty of effecting an escape from the coasts of Dorsetshire or Devonshire, she strenuously recommended that he should adopt some low disguise, assume as much as possible the Somersetshire dialect, and strike across the country for the Bristol Channel, in which direction there would be a less vigilant search for the fugitives, and more numerous opportunities of hiring a boat or vessel to convey him beyond the reach of danger. To elucidate his route she presented him with a small pocket map of Dorsetshire and Somersetshire, and anticipating his arrival at the sea-side, apologized for inquiring whether he possessed the means of remunerating

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the fishermen, or other coasters, for procuring his escape. Reuben frankly declared that his purse was almost empty, and that the want of such an indispensable article as money had been his principal motive for visiting that neighbourhood, with the intention of obtaining a supply from his uncle.—"I anticipated that this might be the case," said Helen, placing a purse of gold in his hand—"and as I am not deterred by any false delicacy from offering, you will not, I am sure, feel any false shame in receiving this little loan, especially as I shall reclaim it from Mr. Goldingham the moment I receive tidings of your safety. Till that happy period arrives it may be as well to leave him in total ignorance of your proceedings, for as my sister and myself, unintentionally both on your part and on ours, have become compromised as the abettors of your concealment and flight, let us take the last responsibility as well as the first; if we are to be implicated, let us have the consolation of knowing, that although we may have committed ourselves, we have at least been the means of exonerating others. All I ask of

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you in return, is, that you will give me, by some safe channel, the quickest intelligence of your arrival in a place of safety, that I may redeem my pledge to Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth." Another blush deeply tinged her features as she thus recalled the base imputations that they had dared to cast upon her honour, but it quickly passed away; and having stated every probable contingency that might assail him in his flight, and suggested such precautions as seemed most likely to obviate danger, or to render its consequences less perilous, she informed him that he might safely remain where he was till dusk, when she trusted he would withdraw to his old hiding-place, and under favour of the darkness quit Harpsden Hall altogether, concluding by a declaration that she should most earnestly pray for his deliverance from the hands of his enemies.

Reuben would have again poured out the fervour of his soul in a burst of heartfelt acknowledgments, but Helen putting her forefinger to her lips, reminded him with a smile, that the moments were too precious for com-

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pliments, which she would defer receiving till they could be tendered without endangering their common safety. So saying, she bowed affably to Reuben, again wished him success in his flight, and taking her sister's arm, was about to accompany her from the apartment, when Adeline, who had no notion of parting so tamely from her lover, turned towards him, and extending her arms, exclaimed, "Oh yes, yes, yes! you will come back to us of course when the amnesty is published. We are not very far, you know, from Goldingham Place. *O ciel! seroit-il possible? quelle idée charmante!* Farewell! farewell! I may bid you adieu in the words of Indamora, the captive Queen:—

> 'Wished freedom, I presage, you soon will find,
> If Heaven be just, and be to virtue kind.'"

Assuming a most tragical look, and throwing one arm upwards, she would have continued the quotation, but was prevented by the gentle violence with which Helen hurried her out of the apartment.

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When Reuben was again left in his solitary closet, all his past life seemed utterly to fade away from his recollection; the part he had taken in the rebellion, and the jeopardy that still so imminently threatened him, were totally driven from his mind; he had no head, no heart, but for the beautiful, the generous, the magnanimous Helen. From the nobleness of her conduct previously to their interview, he was prepared for elevation of soul and dignity of sentiment; but that she should unite all the milder and more humble virtues to this majesty of feeling, that she should be so sagacious, discreet, and provident, so delicate in her generous forethought, so considerate for the safety of others, so willing to sacrifice her own; that she should be at once a heroine, and at the same time the most modest, feminine, and unassuming of her sex; that her thoughts, high and exalted as they were, should be set to such heart-winning music by the sweetness of her voice, and that both should be ennobled by a face and form of surpassing intelligence and loveliness, constituted altogether such a combination of

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attractions as excited his wonder, not less supremely than his delight, and left him for some time completely absorbed and enraptured in the recollection of her unparalleled endowments. Little as they required it, they received the full benefit of contrast when he compared them with Adeline's. With the beauty of the latter, indeed, as well as with her frank, not to say familiar deportment, he had been struck in their first interview; but in the midst of all her apparent interest in his fate, there appeared such real indifference, or at least such an incapacity to suggest any available resource for his extrication, that he had not been long in discovering her to be a compound of levity and affectation, flightiness and frivolity, who either wanted the delicacy to feel, or the sense to apprehend, the impropriety of their clandestine meetings, and who was consequently little calculated to inspire any other than an evanescent admiration. These considerations only served to elevate Helen, for whom, in short, he already felt that empassioned yearning of the heart,

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and devotion of the soul, which form the first elements of a pure and exalted love.

Calypso was not more inconsolable for the departure of Ulysses, than was Adeline at the anticipated loss of her lover. To have so charming, so delightful an adventure, one that seemed to have been expressly sent to break the horrid monotony of her country life, thus nipped in the very bud, was sufficiently provoking; but to expel her own dear darling Arcadius from the sanctuary he had chosen; to drive him forth to certain destruction,—for, after what their brother had said, his escape was next to impossible; to deprive her of the sweetest and most interesting lover she ever had;—it was base, barbarous, inhospitable, unnatural. She wondered she could ever have acquiesced in so inhuman a proposal, that she should have sanctioned an act of treachery totally unprecedented in any of the romances she had ever read; but she had suffered herself to be swayed by Helen, who had no feeling, no sensibility, no passion; who was never, like

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herself, elevated into a beatific ecstasy, nor plunged into a desolating despair. Even now, although she had tacitly consented to Helen's cold-blooded proposition, she doubted whether she ought to allow its execution; whether she ought not rather to obey the dictates of love and honour, by continuing to afford her protection to the unfortunate, the much-enduring, the persecuted Arcadius. At all events she might make inquiries in the immediate neighbourhood, and reconnoitre the adjacent country, to ascertain whether the house were not too closely beleaguered to allow of his decamping on the coming night, which had been so unfeelingly fixed as the period of his departure, but which she was determined to postpone, if her inquiries afforded her any plausible pretext for so doing.

Having put on her hood and scarf, she accordingly sallied forth unattended, marching sometimes with the erect look and dignified pace of a heroine of romance, and at others stealing timidly forward, and examining every bush and tree with the scrupulous distrust of one

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who feels that she has her lover's life in her hands, and anticipates a covert enemy in every object she encounters. After having thus reconnoitered for some little time, she was accosted by a common-looking man, who taking off his hat, respectfully inquired the way to Harpsden Hall. Thoughtless as she usually was, her suspicions were now too much awakened to allow her to answer this question without having ascertained its object, especially as she had taken it into her head that the stranger was some scout or spy of the Government. When however, in reply to her interrogatories, he stated that he was the bearer of a letter to Lady Trevanian, from one of her friends at Dorchester, recommending him to fill the vacant post of butler in her Ladyship's family, an idea suddenly started into Adeline's mind, which was entertained with the greater avidity because it not only savoured of something like a new adventure, and one, moreover, that was of a dramatic and romantic character, but promised to gratify the darling object of her soul, by preventing a separation between herself and



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her lover. This precious scheme was no other than that Reuben should personate the stranger with whom she was conversing, that he should present the letter to Lady Trevanian, and procure himself to be engaged as her butler. Where could he possibly be so safe and free from suspicion, as when wearing the livery of a nobleman who was known to be one of the most loyal and staunch supporters of the Government? Who would dream of looking for a rebel domiciliated in such a well-affected household? It was a certain protection for the present; an amnesty would shortly be published, when Reuben would resume his proper rank in society, Mr. Goldingham would recognize him as his heir; he would make his declaration in form; and what could be more respectable or desirable, than that a poor family like theirs, for neither Helen nor herself possessed a shilling of portion, should be connected with a gentleman who was understood to be one of the wealthiest in the whole country? With the rapidity of lightning had this pleasant vision flashed across her mind, while the man had

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been waiting for an answer; and as to any embarrassment that might result from adopting so perilous a freak, she was not in the habit of calculating contingencies when the whim of the moment assumed the form of so pleasant and strange an incident. All her present thought was to execute her project as quickly as possible, and she accordingly informed the man that she was the daughter of Lady Trevanian, who was already provided with a butler, but that she would take charge of the letter to her mother, who had been for some time expecting to hear from her friend at Dorchester. Expressing her regret that he should have come so far to so little purpose, she gave him a piece of gold to comfort him for his disappointment, and having watched him for some little time as he trudged back again, she returned with all speed to the house, elated beyond measure at the possession of a letter which was to secure the presence and the safety of her lover, and exulting in the ingenuity of the little plot which she had so promptly and so happily conceived for retaining him.



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Without communicating her purpose to Helen, she hurried instantly to the closet, obtained an interview with Reuben, and triumphantly related the device she had contrived, urging its immediate adoption as a certain means of eluding detection until a pardon could be procured, or his flight be more safely effected. Reuben recoiled in the first instance from the proposition, not on account of the degradation of his assuming such a character, for under his present circumstances he held himself warranted in practising any *ruse de guerre;* but from an apprehension that it might tend to implicate Helen still more seriously, and he therefore inquired, whether she sanctioned the measure. Without uttering a direct falsehood, Adeline, in her exclamatory and Frenchified phrases, artfully led him to suppose that her sister was a party to the project, adding, that it was now their only alternative, and that there was not an instant to be lost in its adoption. Desiring nothing more ardently than to continue near Helen, believing that she wished him to assume this temporary disguise, trusting implicitly in

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her discretion, and always prone to yield to the impulse of the moment, without sufficiently perpending consequences, Reuben signified his assent, and Adeline withdrew in great glee, after having informed him that he had nothing to do but to make his way down the back-stairs by which he had ascended, to present himself at the gate, deliver his letter, and await the result.

Easy and certain of success as all this appeared to the volatile projector of the enterprize, Reuben saw by a single glance at a mirror in the room, that his costume was not exactly calculated to support his assumed character. To alter his appearance as much as possible he cut off his flowing locks with a pair of scissors which he found among the drawing implements, and imparting an appropriate homeliness to the arrangement of his attire, since he could not vulgarize its quality, he put the letter in his pocket, having previously so far developed its contents as to ascertain that his new name was to be Samuel Norton. Thus instructed and provided, he stole out of the painting-room, made his way to the back-stairs, de-

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scended them unobserved, let himself out of the side gate leading to the offices, ran round to the principal entrance, boldly rang the bell, and presenting the letter, was desired to wait in the porch for an answer.

Not many minutes elapsed ere he was summoned into the presence of Lady Trevanian, before whose bold and searching eye he could not stand altogether unabashed, for he felt the humiliation of the first act of duplicity to which he had ever had recourse. He still retained, however, a more ingratiating letter of recommendation than that which he had delivered, for her Ladyship liked to surround herself with people of a comely presence, even to the lowest of her household. She had an instinctive hatred of an ugly face, often observing that since her rank required her to keep a gallery of living paintings by the divine artist, it was just as cheap, and infinitely more delightful, to select the most beautiful and pleasant subjects she could find. It may be supposed, therefore, that Reuben's personal advantages tended in no small degree to facilitate his engagement, al-

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though the hurried and unskilful manner in which he had performed upon himself the functions of a barber, did not escape her Ladyship's keen and critical glance. "Pr'ythee, young man," she said, "what means this unsightly crop-eared fashion of the head? You are not of a Puritan breed, I trust. Out of mere charity I have already received an Anabaptist girl into my house to wait upon my daughters, and I have vowed never to give shelter to another of the same persuasion, for she has already made a convert of my own maid, who is ever singing hymns, or reading pious pamphlets, instead of mending lace, or looking to my manteaus and gorgets." Reuben declared that he had been educated in the principles of the Church of England—"Principles!" resumed her Ladyship; "I care not for principles, for the best of them have been made use of for the worst mal-practices. I hate cant and hypocrisy, and have therefore no fancy for fanatics. Conduct, young man, conduct is the main thing. Attend to your duty, be as smart in your attire as may be consistent with your

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station, take good care of your livery, for ours is too rich and costly to receive slovenly treatment, and you shall have no reason to regret your service." So saying, she turned to an attending page, and bade him accompany his new fellow-servant to his apartment, where he would find the livery of his predecessor, observing, that it would be sure to fit him, for they were as nearly as possible of the same height, since she never engaged any mean or undersized figures. Having bowed and retired, Reuben, inducted into his garret, arrayed himself in his new garments, which justified her Ladyship's statement, both as to their rich decorations, and their adapting themselves very appropriately to his figure; made his toilet as appropriately as he could; descended into the servant's offices, introduced himself to his comrades of the kitchen, and thus, to his own no small astonishment at the rapidity of the change, found himself regularly installed as the butler at Harpsden Hall.

Helen was not less alarmed than displeased at the intelligence when Adeline, simpering and

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bridling, and assuming prodigious merit to herself for hitting upon so ingenious and original a contrivance, which she declared would furnish them a hundred delightful scenes, quite as good as any in a play, communicated to her what she had done. The silly girl had in the first instance intended to conceal the occurrence until after supper, just to see whether her sister would recognize her metamorphosed Arcadius while he waited upon them at table; but having shrewdness enough to recollect that her sudden surprise, should she detect him, might lead to a discovery, and consequently to his dismissal, she thought fit to prepare her for his presence beforehand. All the dangerous consequences that might result from this most indiscreet freak, especially as it would tend to nourish Adeline's thoughtless passion, occurred quickly to the penetrating mind of Helen, and yet she scarcely saw how the mischief could now be prevented, unless by incurring still greater hazards. Reuben's sudden disappearance, after having been formally hired, would excite suspicion, and perhaps occasion him to



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be pursued; no disclosure could be made to Lady Trevanian without implicating her in the same responsibility with themselves, which both of them wished to avoid; and Helen could not deny that the disguise might afford an effectual concealment till the appearance of the amnesty, now daily expected to be published, and which, according to the general rumour, would limit punishment to a very few of the leaders, and extend a free pardon, even to many for whose apprehension a reward had been offered. Not seeing any safe and immediate method of extricating herself from the dilemma in which Adeline's imprudence had involved them, she had therefore no alternative but to yield to circumstances, and await the course of events, strictly stipulating, however, with her sister, that she should never speak to her Arcadius, as she ridiculously called him, except when she herself was present.

Adeline's exclamations of horror, both in French and English, when she found that Reuben had cut off his beautiful locks, "*La plus belle chevelure du monde,*" would have led

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any uninitiated auditor to believe that the preservation of his hair, and not of his head, had been the great object of her exertions. "Let me die!" she exclaimed, "if, instead of being degraded by his livery, his fine figure does not ennoble, and give an air of *haut ton* even to a servant's trappings. *Ah! ne t'ai je pas dit qu'il était un parfait Amour, un homme fait à peindre?* Confess, Helen, that he is quite *gentil* and *distingué*—that he has the *abord* of one who has been used to the *grand monde*, and looks completely like what he is—a hero in disguise." Her significant self-betraying looks as she stole a glance at Reuben while he waited upon them, and then at her sister; her titterings, when, in his ignorance of a butler's duty, he committed some little blunder; or when, in her own giddiness, she half-pronounced the word Arcadius; her exclamations and heroics when any thing occurred that threatened a discovery of their plot; and the general unguardedness of her conduct, tried to the very utmost the composure of Helen's temper, and kept her in a state of anxiety the more harrassing, be-

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cause she was obliged to suppress every external manifestation of her feelings. Adeline's eccentricities and vagaries were too common, however, to excite any particular attention in Lady Trevanian, though she would not have failed to notice any thing that disturbed the placid and sedate temperament of Helen.

Although she knew his birth and real station in society, the latter could not help feeling an almost insurmountable repugnance to any of those private interviews with a man wearing a livery, to which she was perpetually urged by the less scrupulous Adeline, whose tender heart could not brook that her own dear darling Arcadius should be altogether metamorphosed into Norton the butler. She even intimated that she should seek opportunities of conversing with him by herself, since her sister declined being present; and Helen seeing the dangerous extent of her infatuation, at last consented to her wishes, secretly resolving to urge Reuben once more to seize some plausible pretext for quitting the house, and relieving them from the cruel embarrassment of his presence. At this

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interview he presently discovered that Adeline had deceived him into the notion that both sisters equally wished him to adopt the servant's disguise. Addressing himself to Helen, Reuben declared that he placed himself entirely at her disposal: that he would instantly, and at all hazards, withdraw when she desired it, and that although he was penetrated with a profound gratitude for the generous efforts she had made to preserve it, he was himself indifferent as to his life, except upon the account of his lost parents, of whose history he gave a brief relation, concluding with the expression of his unabated hope that they would one day be restored to his embraces, if he lived; while he declared, that if he died, he was fully determined not to entail ignominy upon them by being gibbeted like a common malefactor.

There was something so touching, so pathetic, in the tenderness and fervour of his filial piety, when alluding to his parents; his misfortunes, heavy and almost unprecedented as they were for one so young, were borne with so resigned a fortitude, though not without having im-

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parted an affecting expression of melancholy to his fine features: his manner was so respectful, his gratitude appeared to be so profound, his soul so honourable and high-principled, that whatever might be the indiscretion and thoughtlessness of Adeline, Helen, now become still more deeply interested in his fate, could not believe he would for an instant deviate from that noble and upright character which seemed to be stamped upon his very features. When she reflected, moreover, that in his determination not to be arrested without a desperate resistance, she might accelerate his destruction if she were to urge him to any precipitate and ill-timed flight, she contented herself with mentioning that a specific day was now publicly talked of for the appearance of the amnesty, expressing her most ardent hope that he would be included in it; but at the same time submitting to him the necessity of his immediately withdrawing from Harpsden Hall, should he be unfortunately excepted from the royal lenity. To this Reuben willingly pledged himself, with renewed expressions of the most im-

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passioned and respectful gratitude; and though Adeline sought various frivolous pretexts for prolonging the interview, her sister, feeling the impropriety of any conversation not strictly limited to the paramount subject in which their common safety was involved, took her arm, and led her from the apartment.

Reuben, as it may well be supposed, was not very expert in his new office, but his natural quickness enabled him to avoid any very egregious blunders; there was but little to do, and Lady Trevanian, struck by his gentlemanly deportment and fine figure, was not disposed to be fastidious about technical niceties, which she considered of minor importance. Thus, therefore, he continued to discharge the duties of his place, unconsciously fostering by his daily presence, and the graceful dignity with which he wore his disguise, the passion of the inflammable Adeline; while the sanctions of time and observation confirmed in himself that ardent love with which Helen had inspired him in their first interview. From listening to her conversation, as well as from an inspection of

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the little library which she had collected for her own use, he soon discovered that she sedulously cultivated a refined taste in literature, at the same time that she seemed to preside over the arrangements of the household like a tutelary genius, preserving order and decorum in every department, and yet winning the love of all those whom she governed and controlled, —so gentle was her sway, so affable her manners, her amiability so cordial, condescending, and benign. Every thing was referred to Helen. She it was who strictly regulated and maintained those little observances of high life, and points of etiquette to which Lady Trevanian had always been indifferent, and of which Adeline was utterly ignorant; while her charities and good offices in the neighbourhood occasioned her to be as much revered in the vicinity, as she was within the immediate precincts of Harpsden Hall. Reuben's menial office, by its enabling him to live in the daily presence of this beloved object, and to be a constant observer of her virtues and accomplishments, became more endeared to him than

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if it had elevated him to royal dignity; he forgot all the dangers that environed him, and had no dread except of the appointed day which had been fixed for his departure, and which was now rapidly approaching.

Nor was he so utterly without congenial society, even among his fellow-servants, as might have been conjectured from the superiority of his habits and education. Reading was his principal solace, and he had ventured from time to time to borrow books out of Helen's library, which he perused in his bed-room at night, taking care to replace them before the family were stirring in the morning. Once, when he had been thus occupied until long after midnight, he discovered that he had inadvertently left the second volume of the work upon which he was engaged in a cupboard below, and cautiously descended the stairs to procure it. On approaching the kitchen for that purpose, he was surprised at hearing a voice, which at such an unseasonable hour excited some suspicion in his mind, and determined him to reconnoitre the apartment, and ascertain the

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quality of its inmate before he entered. The room in question was spacious though not lofty, its ceiling being crossed by a massy beam, whence hung hams, tongues, and various culinary apparatus. The fire-place, of the antique construction, surmounted by a ponderous projecting chimney, was provided with a yawning oven on one side, and a brick seat on the other, where the wayfaring guest, if he could endure both fire and soot, might enjoy in its original impurity the luxury of a chimney corner. Opposite, and apparently coeval with it, stood a gigantic clock, whose works and long descending pendulum were almost solid enough for a modern steam-engine. The voice he had heard was now silent; there were no sounds save the solemn and loud "tick-tack! tick-tack!" of the giant clock, accompanied by the chirping of a solitary cricket from the oven, and the purring of a large black cat dosing before the fire.

These objects and sounds, however, had not engaged Reuben's attention, which was exclusively absorbed by a female figure kneeling upon the brick floor at a small distance from the fire.

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This was Grace, the Anabaptist girl who attended upon Lady Trevanian's daughters, and whose proselyting zeal she had condemned. Her hair was drawn back and confined under a close, plain cap, her attire exhibited the quaker-like simplicity of the puritans; and yet homely and unbecoming as was her garb, there was something in the sorrow-stricken expression of her delicate wan features, even when the fitful flaring of the fire imparted to them an almost ghastly hue, which it was difficult not to admire, with which it was impossible not to sympathize. Supported on a stool before her was a large open Bible, on which her eyes were at first earnestly fixed, but when afterwards they were thrown devoutly upwards, their black orbs seemed to glare with an eager wildness that was hardly in accordance with the subdued mournfulness of her other features, and still less with her low, plaintive, and mellow voice, as she sang a psalm, calling upon the Lord to protect his Saints, and deliver them from the hands of their enemies. This being completed she again consulted her Bible for a short space, and then crossing her hands upon

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it, and once more fixing her lamp-like eyes upon the ceiling, she uttered a long extempore prayer, whose fervent and spontaneous eloquence excited less astonishment in her auditor than its purport, for she not only implored protection and deliverance for all those Saints and servants of the Lord who had been fighting the good fight under the martyred Protestant Prince at Sedgemoor, and were now fleeing before the face of their enemies, but prayed that they might be avenged of the heathen, that they might bind their king in chains, and their nobles with links of iron, and smite the idolatrous James upon his throne, even as Samuel caused Agag, the King of the Amalekites, to be hewed to pieces in Gilgal before the face of the Lord.

As this pious effusion of high treason involved the life of its utterer, and was obviously not meant to be overheard, Reuben, content with having been so unexpectedly prayed for in the house of one of the King's most furious partisans, attempted to withdraw without being overheard by the fair enthusiast, in which, however, he did not succeed. Conscious as she must have been

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that her audacious orisons involved matter of life and death, she exhibited not the smallest sign of apprehension as she calmly walked towards the door and exclaimed,—"The fate of Judas and of Haman be upon all traitors and evesdroppers. Amen! Norton!" she continued, upon recognizing Reuben, "why are you awake and stirring at this late watch of the night when all but the unhappy are asleep; and why do you interrupt my devotions in this sole sanctuary where I can sing praises to the Lord without being overheard, and mocked, and rebuked by the scorners?"—Reuben explained the object of his untimely visit to the kitchen, thus strangely converted into an oratory, adding that he might well be wakeful, since he too was one of the unhappy; and that so far from being an intentional evesdropper, or a traitor, he fully participated in such sentiments as he had heard, though he warned her of the imprudence of uttering them.

"Say you so, say you so?" eagerly exclaimed Grace, while her wild-looking eyes flashed up with a pious fervour; "are you then one of the

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regenerate, one of the Lord's people, one of the children of the elect, have you a portion in David, have you inheritance in the son of Jesse, have you been baptised with water, have you lifted up your hands for enslaved and afflicted Zion, against the royal Idolator, and all the scarlet abominations of Rome?" In the same strain, and with an earnest rapidity that would not allow her to pause for an answer, she ran on with a long string of somewhat incoherent interrogations, to the no small surprise of Reuben, who having hitherto always seen her sitting like a figure of patient sorrow, or silent timidity, eternally plying her needle, and appearing to commune with nothing but her own sad thoughts, little expected such a burst of fluent and fertile enthusiasm. Grace, in fact, either could not, or would not, converse upon any other subject, though upon this, when she had once fairly started it, she was never deficient in matter, and consequently seldom disposed to stop. Contenting himself with answering in a general way that he was, like herself, a friend to civil and religious liberty, Reuben, unwilling

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longer to interrupt her devotions, took the volume for which he had visited the kitchen, bade her good-night, and was retiring, when she stopped him by another pious rhapsody against Pagan, carnal, and ungodly books. At the conclusion of which philippic she placed in his hands a bundle of devout tracts and Anabaptist pamphlets, earnestly exhorting him to peruse them in preference to all the profane learning of the world; and Reuben, thanking her for her friendly intentions, made his escape, though not without some difficulty, to his own room.

The Puritan girl, or Crazy Grace, as she was sometimes nicknamed by her companions, completely out of her element in the household of the fashionable Lady Trevanian, was the butt of all the clumsy gibes and vulgar practical jokes of her fellow-servants. The foul fiend Flibbertigibbet never inflicted more malicious pranks upon his victims than she was doomed to undergo almost every day of her existence, from her mischievous, unfeeling comrades; and no saint ever endured them with

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a more placid and patient resignation. As Lady Trevanian, who had engaged her partly from charity, partly from her extraordinary skill in needlework, considered her one of the fanatics, whom she hated by wholesale, she had no friend or protectress in the family except Helen, who respected her enthusiasm, though she could not deny that her proselyting efforts sometimes evinced more zeal than discretion. Her Ladyship's maid, however, struck by her equanimity under a series of petty persecutions, which might have irritated the most patient of the martyrs, became a convert to her opinions; and Reuben was now destined to sustain the fervour of her eloquence whenever she encountered him, in the hope that he might be persuaded to adopt her own peculiar tenets, since she had discovered that he was well affected towards the friends of liberty and the dwellers in Zion.

A few nights after their interview in the kitchen, he again found himself *tête-à-tête* with her in the same place, when she expressed her regret, but with a gentle sorrow rather than in

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anger, that she could not point out to his attention a particular passage in the Scriptures, confirmatory of her own views, because some of her fellow-servants had hidden her Bible. Reuben declared he had one up-stairs, which he would willingly lend her, and he accordingly brought down that which had been delivered to him on the field of battle at Sedgemoor. No sooner had he placed it in her hands than she uttered a faint shuddering cry, the colour rushed to her cheeks, and as instantly forsook them; she kissed the book repeatedly in a kind of transport, and exclaimed in an agitated voice, "It is! it is! it is my brother's Bible! the Bible of my beloved brother Joel! We heard that he was among the slaughtered saints, and now indeed do I know that he is dead; for he would never part with that holy book, my father's gift, while he had any hope of life." She paused for a moment, and then, as if a sudden conviction had flashed upon her mind, she fixed her piercing black eyes upon Reuben, held up her fore-finger, and continued, in a hurried whisper—"You were there; you have endured



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harness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ! you were one of the army of the saints; one of the champions of the Lord! You have fought against the Amalekites and the Philistines; you have worn the helmet of salvation; you have borne the banner of the Protestant Prince; you smote with the sword at Sedgemoor!"

Abashed by her keen, searching eye, as well as at his being thus unexpectedly detected, Reuben stood for a few seconds irresolute what answer to make; but recollecting that he was more likely to secure an unflinching friend, than incur any risk of treachery by a simple confession of the truth, now indeed more than half discovered, he admitted her suspicions to be well founded, and related the circumstances under which the Bible had been entrusted to his custody, but without revealing his real name and station. During his statement of the valorous and even desperate energy with which her brother had fought, and of which he had for some time been an eye-witness, Grace seemed to be inspired with the tale to which she listened: she clenched her hands; her lips were

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firmly compressed; her eyes kindled fiercely; the colour mounted even to her forehead; her veins became distended; her usually meek countenance underwent a total transformation; and in the ebullience of her sympathy she could not refrain from interrupting his narrative by occasional exclamations of "The righteous are brave as a lion! The righteous are brave as a lion! Oh, noble Joel!" But when Reuben, in obedience to her strict injunctions to be minute, described her brother lying upon the ground, pierced with wounds, singing psalms, encouraging his comrades, and with his last breath desiring that his Bible might be delivered to his father, with a declaration that he had done his duty, Grace, melting into tenderness and sorrow, sank into a chair, her relaxed hands were crossed over one another, the tears poured upon them in an uninterrupted stream, she sobbed bitterly, and seemed to be almost choked with the violence of her emotions. Thus she remained for some time, totally deaf and insensible to the consolations that Reuben suggested, until, starting from her seat, and



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throwing herself suddenly upon her knees, while her countenance was animated with a recovered firmness, she poured forth a passionate prayer, imploring the Lord to avenge his slaughtered saints, to build up a new Zion with their blood, and confound the impious politics of the crowned Absalom, who had falsely set himself up for a king in Israel. In this strain she prayed uninterruptedly, and at considerable length; and then rising from her kneeling posture, walked out of the room, without taking any further notice of Reuben.

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## CHAPTER III.

"Though perils did
Abound as thick as thought could make 'em, and
Appear in forms more horrid; yet my duty,
As doth a rock against the chiding flood,
Should the approach of this wild river break,
And stand unshaken yours."

SHAKSPEARE.

GRACE now seized every opportunity of engaging Reuben's attentions; she might be almost literally said to haunt him, for she looked more like a pale and anxious spirit, than a being of this world; and her ghostly conversation accorded well with her unearthly appearance. Sometimes, indeed, she would discourse of her martyrèd brother, as she termed

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him, but she still finally reverted to the subject of her own peculiar notions in religion, exerting her proselyting powers, in season and out of season, with a pertinacious importunity that allowed little respite to its object. She was, however, so obviously stimulated by a deep-rooted regard for his eternal welfare; there was something so modest, and yet so affectionate, in her eloquent enthusiasm, that Reuben could not wound her feelings by withdrawing himself from her pious exhortations, though he could have wished that she had been a little more guarded in obtruding herself upon his society, since their frequent interviews, and long colloquies, had already supplied an additional subject of banter and insinuation to their fellow-servants, both male and female. In the singleness of her heart, and the perfect purity of her soul, Grace was a stranger even to the thoughts that might naturally occur to less innocent minds. There was no room in her bosom for any idea that was not chaste and holy; much of the coarse ridicule, therefore, with which she was assailed upon Reuben's

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account, she really did not understand; and what she could comprehend, she treated with the disdain inspired by a consciousness of her own spotless integrity.

Reuben, in the mean while, becoming every hour more deeply fascinated by the charms and exalted virtues of Helen, marked with an increasing regret the approach of that day which had been prescribed for his departure from Harpsden Hall; at which period, however painful he might find it to tear himself away, and relinquish a happiness such as he had never before experienced, he resolved not to hesitate for a moment in the redemption of his pledge. Even should he be included in the amnesty, and enabled, by resuming his station, to present himself on a footing of greater equality with his mistress, he saw that there would be many impediments to the success of his suit; for he considered Helen to be above him in every sense of the word, and he dreaded the political prejudices of her father. There would be an end, too, of those privileges which now filled his soul with an intoxication of de-

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light; he would be no longer in her daily presence, no longer able to listen to her dulcet voice, to doat upon her beautiful and benignant features, to witness her matchless virtues and endowments. From his knowledge of the King's severity, he deemed it more likely, however, that he should be excepted from the benefit of the amnesty, in which case his flight would be embittered by the recollection, that in spite of the most vigilant precautions, he might eventually implicate the generous, the adored Helen, and perhaps compromise the safety of her family.

In the midst of these gloomy reflections, his anxiety was not a little increased, while that of the two sisters became proportionably aggravated, by a most unexpected letter from Lord Trevanian, desiring certain apartments which he specified, to be prepared for his immediate reception, as he was about to visit Harpsden Hall, for the purpose of inquiring into the conduct of his tenants during the late rebellion, and of assisting in the apprehension and punishment of those, if any such there were, who

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had forgotten their loyalty to his most sacred and anointed Majesty, King James. This startling intelligence awoke Réuben from the delicious dream of remaining under the same roof with Helen until the stipulated day, for he knew, from the professed object of Lord Trevanian's journey, that he would make it his business and delight to ferret out offenders; he feared that his own inexpertness in his assumed character might awaken his suspicions; and he dreaded the effect of his wrath upon his daughters, should his natural sternness and tyranny be inflamed by a knowledge of the succour they had afforded to a proscribed rebel. His Lordship, inexorable himself in his political animosities, was not likely to make any allowances for the compassion of his children, especially after they had profaned the hitherto spotless loyalty of Harpsden Hall, by enrolling a traitor in its household. Reuben saw that Adeline was bewildered and aghast, while Helen's placidly sedate brow assumed a grave and anxious expression from the moment that they learnt their father's purpose, and in the



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hope of relieving them from apprehensions which he could not bear to contemplate, he resolved to decamp without communicating his intentions to either of them. Certain preliminary arrangements, intended to conceal as much as possible the real motives of his absconding, had already been completed, and the following night had been fixed on for his departure, when, to the surprize of the whole household, his Lordship made his appearance at the gate, having anticipated the period he had announced for his arrival, in order to precede the commission which had been ordered into the West, for the trial of the Monmouth partisans.

Every look and gesture of Lord Trevanian seemed to be a perpetual struggle to raise himself above his natural littleness, both physical and moral; and every attempt was a total failure. His insignificant figure was rendered more conspicuously mean by its being above half absorbed in a voluminous wig; the disproportionate length of his gold-hilted sword drew attention to the shortness of its wearer; the breadth and fulness of his rich embroideries

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made his person appear still more diminutive; his solemn and sonorous voice, by exciting expectation, gave to the pompous emptiness of his discourse a more emphatic inanity; and when in his slow and stately strut he raised himself as high as he could upon his toe, before he again threw out his foot, it seemed as if every pace were doomed to illustrate the truth of the dictum—that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Cold, haughty, and repulsive in his demeanour, he received the welcome of Lady Trevanian, which was perhaps more courteous than sincere, with a formal recognition, that could only amount, at best, to a negative politeness; while his daughters were honoured with a chilling notice, and a condescending expression of his being glad to see them, wherein the purport of the words was pointedly contradicted by the manner of their utterance. Between himself and her ladyship there were sufficient reasons why no great cordiality should subsist, but that he should be careless of the affections, and insensible to the merits of such a daughter as Helen, showed

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him to be at least as blindly heartless and selfish, as he was pompous, shallow, and obstinate.

As the family had dined when he thus unexpectedly arrived, some little time elapsed before a fresh repast could be provided for his Lordship, whose dignity as well as appetite were both wounded by the delay, and whose temper was proportionably soured when he was summoned to the dining-room. Reuben was in attendance, and, as it may be well supposed, in a state of the most anxious embarrassment as to the proper discharge of his duty before one, whom he had understood from his fellow-servants to be a fastidious, severe, and implacable master. His Lordship seldom spoke to his domestics, except to issue orders, which he always uttered in a loud, imperious tone, as if his high voice could compensate for his low stature in asserting his dignity and authority. Upon the present occasion his haughty moroseness was confined to the cook, who had displeased him in one of the dishes, notwithstanding which he made a most hearty meal, and appeared to

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have, in some degree, appeased his ill-humour with his hunger. Eager to make his escape, Reuben was placing the wines and dessert upon the table, when his Lordship, measuring him with a most supercilious scrutiny, inquired his name, and how long he had been at Harpsden Hall. Reuben gave his assumed name, and with a low bow declared that he had only had the honour of wearing his Lordship's livery for a few weeks. Either the phrase itself, or the manner in which it had been spoken, found favour with the Peer, for he proceeded to inquire, in a somewhat less arrogant tone, in whose service he had last lived. Willing to spare a direct falsehood when his purpose could be answered by a little prevarication, Reuben replied that he had been the bearer of a letter from Mrs. Stacey Chilvers of Dorsetshire, who had been kind enough to recommend him.—"She is an honourable lady and of good blood, and her husband is a loyal and staunch Tory," said the Peer, apparently pleased that he had come from so well affected a family; but immediately recollecting that this observation

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might be considered as addressed to his servant, a piece of condescension which he deemed derogatory to his rank, he gathered up all the dignity that he could muster into his mean features, lifted up his head, gave the wig in which he was smothered a solemn shake, waved his hand most magisterially, and said in an authoritative voice—"You may be gone, Sir;—quit the room!" a mandate which was instantly and cheerfully obeyed.

Notwithstanding this unceremonious dismissal, Reuben's fellow-servant, who happened to be at the sideboard at the time, assured him that he would become a favourite, for he had never before known his master conduct himself so graciously towards a domestic, and especially a new one; a circumstance which he attributed to the mention of Mrs. Stacey Chilvers, who was, like his Lordship, a furious tantivi Tory.—Reuben himself was disposed to acquiesce in the opinion of his comrade; and to balance, therefore, the propriety of his flying from Harpsden Hall, as he had so recently intended, a measure which would now infallibly rouse his

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Lordship's suspicions, and lead to inquiries that might occasion his quick pursuit and apprehension. Besides, the worst ordeal was now past; he had stood the fire of his Lordship's scrutinizing eye; he thought it not unlikely that he might ingratiate himself into his favour; and certainly no place could more effectually secure him from discovery, and even suspicion, than one which put him in personal attendance upon a nobleman, who had obtained such a character for penetration, as well as for the rigorous severity of his high Tory principles, that it was presumable no one would have the temerity to attempt imposing upon him. Influenced by these considerations, and swayed perhaps still more by the yearning desire of his heart not to withdraw himself from Helen, he determined to resume his original intention, and to retain his menial disguise, at least until the day assigned by rumour for the publication of the amnesty, when he would be governed by the circumstance of his exclusion, or of his being pardoned, as to his future conduct, and the mode of withdrawing himself.

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All hopes, however, of this long and anxiously-expected amnesty were now about to be utterly dispelled, and to be succeeded by a general consternation and horror throughout those counties which had formed the scene of the rebellion; for the furious, the relentless, the blood-thirsty Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, furnished with a Commission of War to command all the forces in the West, and attended by a troop of dragoons, as his body-guard, arrived at Dorchester, for the trial of the unfortunate rebels, of whom many hundreds were dispersed in the various prisons. The court of law was ordered to be hung with red, as if by hoisting this bloody flag it was his intention to proclaim that no quarter should be given to the miserable culprits; while by his injunction to the Grand Jury, to inquire not only after all principals, but after all aiders and abettors of those who had been concerned in the rebellion, it was obvious that he intended to implicate as many as possible in the fury of his sweeping vengeance. The atrocities of this legal ruffian, to whose brutal rage three hun-

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dred-and-fifty wretched fellow-creatures, out of the thousand whom he had condemned to death, were sacrificed with a refinement of cruelty that seemed intended to rival the savage barbarities of his friend Colonel Kirke, are matters of history with which it is neither our wish nor our purpose to interfere. Two executions, however, occurred to which we shall briefly advert, on account of the dismay which the identity of their own offence excited in the bosoms of Helen and Adeline, and of the consternation which their fearful liability imparted to Reuben. A Mrs. Gaunt had given refuge and a supply of money to one of her neighbours, who had fled from the battle of Sedgemoor, but who, being afraid that his escape beyond sea might be prevented, had the baseness to inform against his benefactress. She was tried for this offence, condemned, and burnt alive! Lady Lisle, a venerable widow above seventy years of age, had in the same manner extended protection to a dissenting clergyman, although she was herself of loyal principles, and had a son actually fighting in the King's army against the Duke

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of Monmouth. The jury returned into court with doubts, because there was no proof of her knowing that the refugee had been in the rebel army; but Jeffreys told them that her receiving him after she suspected it, was equivalent; and when they found her guilty, he said, "If she had been my mother I would have returned the same verdict against her." Great interest was made in her behalf, but the inhuman judge had exacted a promise from James not to pardon her, and the only favour she obtained was to be beheaded, not burnt.

Helen and Adeline had placed themselves in an exactly similar predicament with these unfortunate sufferers; and though their feelings would under any circumstances have been shocked and revolted at such barbarous executions, they were of course still more deeply and dreadfully harrowed by the knowledge that they were now amenable to the same cruel and ignominious fate; a fate, moreover, in which their mother, who was considered a favourer of the Whig principles, might on that account alone be ultimately implicated;

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and which would be sure to draw down upon their heads the malediction of their infuriated father. Every thing, in short, combined to overwhelm them with horror and deep agony of soul. Jeffreys had declared from the bench, that it would not be his fault if he did not depopulate the place where he was then holding his bloody assize! and the loathsome and atrocious executions which quickly followed his declaration, proved that his words were no empty menace. Upon almost every tower and church were nailed up the grisly heads of fathers and brothers; houses and trees were covered with mangled limbs; the maypoles were converted into gibbets; and the village greens were polluted with ghastly carcases which tainted the wholesome air, and spread a sickening anguish and desolation of soul through the surrounding districts. Terror and distrust sate upon every brow, the bonds of civil society were dissolved, the duties of nature were suspended; everybody dreaded his neighbour; each attempted to conceal his grief lest his loyalty should be suspected; and the

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living, perhaps, presented a still more humiliating spectacle than the dead bodies which thus unmanned them; for the deceased had in most instances laid down their lives with an unflinching courage, and without a single compromise of principle.

Amid forsaken walls, and through such appalling scenes, were Helen and Adeline doomed to move, when they once accompanied their father in the carriage beyond the precincts of Harpsden Hall, shuddering not less at the sight of such savage butchery, than at the reflection that they themselves might be shortly doomed to increase the number of the victims. Once only were their feelings thus lacerated, for they subsequently constituted themselves prisoners at home, for which indeed an unanswerable plea was now afforded by the indisposition of Adeline, who in her terror of what she had seen, and of the awful jeopardy in which she had placed herself and her sister, became subject to hysterical affections, and conducting herself still more wildly and unguardedly than ever, talked at times of relieving herself from the

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intolerable burthen that preyed upon her mind, by confessing every thing to her father. Against this species of desperation, engendered by weakness and terror, as well as against the levity and thoughtlessness of her less disturbed moods, her sister was obliged to keep a perpetual watch, at a moment when she had occasion for all the undivided energies, fortitude, and forethought of her own soul. These, however, did not fail her in the hour of trial; her self-possession and courage seemed to increase with the magnitude of the danger; her heart became braced by her indignation against the merciless atrocities she witnessed: while her inherent hatred of oppression, and the thought of the cruel fate from which she had rescued Reuben, reconciled her to the part she had acted. She felt that she had done her duty as a woman and a Christian, and fortified in this impression she awaited the result of her conduct with the noble calmness of an undismayed spirit, though not without anxiety for those who were implicated with her, and who evinced much less firmness than herself.

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Reuben's countenance indeed bore visible testimony to the convulsion with which his soul was shaken, for, indifferent as he was to life upon his own account, he was panic-stricken and appalled when the execution of Lady Lisle and Mrs. Gaunt placed before his eyes the full extent of the responsibility that he had entailed upon the two sisters. Their lives and his own were now suspended by one and the same thread; a single false step might plunge them all into inevitable ruin: while the fear of committing this irreparable error kept him in a state of agonizing suspense which betrayed itself upon his haggard features. Helen, who was indeed the principal source of this intense anxiety, was the first to observe it, and to attempt its alleviation. Seizing an opportunity of speaking a few words to him apart, she bade him be of good cheer, and not wear such an agitated and tell-tale look. "You placed your life in our hands," she exclaimed; "ours are now in yours. When you state that your unhappiness is upon our account, remember that nobody can betray us but yourself; if, therefore, you have the

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same confidence in your own honour that we have, you have nothing to fear for our sakes, and may direct all your thoughts to the consideration of your own safety. Believe in us, as we do in you, and you may possess your soul in a patient assurance. Perhaps you have never had occasion to put your trust in an honest-hearted woman. Do it boldly, unreservedly, not only in this instance, but in all; for such a one is incapable of divulging a secret, she is incapable of treachery, she is incapable, indeed, of any thing that is base; and where she feels that she has discharged her duty, both towards God and man, she is incapable of fear." Her fine countenance was elevated as she spoke by an expression of lofty courage, of noble pride—no, these are poor and inadequate terms;—by a character of grandeur, heroism, sublimity, that seemed to lift her above mortality, and all that it is heir to; or rather to impart to her the calm courageous majesty of a divine nature, at the same time that she retained all the modest and unassuming attractions of humanity. Reuben was electrified, too much awed at the in-

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stant even to utter his acknowledgments and admiration, and Helen retired before his arrested feelings could vent themselves in speech; but his bosom remained fortified and inspired by the intrepidity of this high-souled woman, and he was thenceforward enabled to survey both his own situation and hers, and to weigh what might be advisable for their mutual safety, with more calmness and self-possession.

There was yet another within the walls of Harpsden Hall whose anxiety on account of its disguised inmate was not less intense and acute than either of the sisters, or even, perhaps, that of Reuben himself, although it had originated in a different source, and was manifested in a totally dissimilar fashion. This was Grace, the Anabaptist girl. From the moment of the discovery she had made in the kitchen, her whole soul had been wrapt up in the safety of her companion, not so much however his temporal, as his eternal preservation. That he should lay down his life in the good cause, that he should become one of the slaughtered Saints, that he should be made a martyr for Israel, that he should imitate the example of her beloved

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brother Joel, appeared to her by no means a dreadful fate, for it was one which she herself would have embraced with indifference, if not with alacrity:—but that he should die unconverted to those peculiar notions, which she believed necessary, if not to salvation, at least to the procurement of the highest and holiest place in that heavenly house where St. John hath declared that there are many mansions, this did appear to her to be a sacrifice of his eternal inheritance, which she was bound to avert by every means in her power, and which she laboured to effect with the most zealous pertinacity, because the death which would finally seal his doom appeared to be near and imminent. Such had been the sole motive with which she had haunted him in the first instance, like a shadow, and plied her proselyting skill with such an earnest importunity.

But as her interviews multiplied, other feelings, unconsciously to herself, began to mingle with this absorbing sentiment, though not so as to offer the smallest alloy to its purity. From Reuben's confession she imagined him to have



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been a common soldier in Monmouth's army, to have moved in the same rank of life as herself, and with this impression she was the more forcibly struck by his gentility of manner, his superior attainments, his polished demeanour and discourse, and the respect with which he ever listened to her exhortations, and invariably defended her against the jeering boorishness of the other servants. All these, while they appeared to be only animating her religious enthusiasm in his behalf, were gradually, and unknown to herself, awakening a more tender feeling in her bosom: compassion is ever closely allied to love, and when, as in the present instance, its object was at once so young, so comely, so unfortunate, and so highly gifted, it could surprise no one except Grace herself, who remained in utter ignorance of the fact, that the feelings of this world should eventually become blended and interwoven with that interest in Reuben's fate which she still imagined to be of the same spiritual nature in which it had exclusively originated. The progress of this change was marked by her increased anxiety

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for his temporal preservation and welfare. When the cruelty of the executions in the neighbourhood brought home to her bosom the fate that awaited him if he were discovered, she no longer thought that it was so little terrible to become one of the slaughtered saints, to join the army of foregone martyrs. On the contrary, she now turned her thoughts from such a catastrophe with aversion and horror; her conversations imperceptibly glided from those topics which involved eternity, to discussions about the means of procuring his escape, should he be compelled to fly from his present place of refuge, in which alternative she most earnestly pressed him to take sanctuary with her father, who inhabited a lone farm, absolutely hidden and sequestered in a chalky glen of the neighbouring downs; who would glory in sheltering a fellow-soldier of his brave and pious Joel; and to whom, as she reminded Reuben, he was bound to deliver the Bible which had been entrusted to him on the field of battle for that purpose.

Such was the state of affairs at Harpsden



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Hall, when Lord Trevanian thought fit to announce his intention of giving a grand dinner to the neighbouring gentry, in honour of the Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, who was discharging his high functions with such an exemplary loyalty and zeal, and who was to be invited to the entertainment. For the appropriate honouring of such a man, no moment, indeed, could have been more happily chosen than the present, when he had converted the country through which he was to proceed to the festive board, into a human shambles and an Aceldama, and would be surrounded in his progress by the trophies that he loved the best—the grisly heads and mangled limbs of his victims. Revolted as she was at this communication, Lady Trevanian knew that her husband's purpose was not to be altered by argument or persuasion, for she had never found him wiser to-day than he had been the day before. No alternative was therefore allowed her but to issue the requisite orders for a banquet, which it was his Lordship's command should be rendered as magnificent as possible, and to which he himself personally undertook the task of inviting

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the guests. This announced festival was not less repulsive than alarming to Helen and Adeline, whose feelings were little in unison with such ill-timed revelry, and who dreaded the discovery that might result from bringing Reuben in collision with the whole assembled neighbourhood. Urging the delicate health of her sister, Helen even ventured to solicit her father's permission for their being both absent from the dinner-table, but his Lordship angrily and peremptorily commanded their presence, adding that he had written to their brother, the Captain, to come over for the occasion from Lyme, as he desired to give his whole family the honour of an introduction to their illustrious visitant. Reuben had, in the first instance, been not less startled than his fair preservers, at the danger of recognition from some of the visitants, and had even entertained the thought of decamping quietly before the day of the entertainment; but relying upon his disguise, believing that in the bustle of such a numerous assemblage he might keep himself in the background unnoticed, and not hearing mentioned among the expected guests any of those to

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whom he had ever been personally known, he determined to discharge the duties of his post; although he was aware that he would have to encounter the formidable Jeffreys, and the not less famous, or infamous, Colonel Kirk, whose rival ferocities had furnished tales of horror to the whole shuddering country, and who was expected to accompany the Judge.

Such was the terror inspired by these two names, even among the gentry—such was the dread of being suspected, even in the remotest degree, of disloyalty, that when a Tantivi Tory, like my Lord Trevanian, issued his cards of invitation, not one, however his feelings might recoil from meeting these competitors in butchery, while the country was yet reeking with the blood they had shed—not one had the courage to decline the degrading honour, except Sir Harcourt Slingsby. Ashamed, however, of any thing so unfashionable as a scruple of conscience, and ever veiling his virtues and right feelings under the disguise of a fantastical frivolity, he assigned as a motive for absenting himself, his disappointment of a splendid new

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suit, which he had ordered from London, and the impossibility of infringing his inviolable rule by appearing in one which had already been published more than a month. Among those who accepted the invitation were Lady Crockatt, condemned to see her husband usurping Cynthia's seat in the carriage, Mrs. Chatsworth, Squire Hartfield, his sister, Sir Ambrose Jessop, and old Nick Chinnery, whom the Squire had brought with him uninvited; assuring Lord Trevanian that he sang a good song, and might be put at the bottom of the table, or at a side-table, or any where. In addition to these parties, and the family of Harpsden Hall, reinforced by the young Captain, there were various other guests, both nobles and commoners, whose names it is not necessary to record.

The hubbub and clattering of his body-guard of Dragoons, and the bustle among the servants, who had been instructed to give him the most distinguished reception possible, announced the arrival of the great man, who was accompanied by his worthy compeer, Colonel

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Kirk. His Lordship was rather above the middling stature, of a fierce staring eye, and a commanding, not to say a terrific brow, rendered still more impressive by the solemnity of the judge's wig that overshadowed it. When Recorder of London he had termed himself the "mouth of the City," a phrase then fixed upon him as a nickname, from the undue expansion of that feature, which still attested the appropriateness of the appellation, though there were few that now dared to apply it. His face was bloated by habitual intemperance; and his blustering irascible countenance bore the impress of a cruel and ambitious nature, intoxicated by success and power, and, at the same time, exacerbated by the pangs of an acute disease, from which all his grandeur could not afford him a respite. His manners, however, were not altogether deficient in the dignity that became his station, unless any thing occurred to thwart or irritate him, when his natural brutality generally broke through all restraint, and a torrent of Billingsgate abuse burst from his lips, to the appropriate accom-

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paniments of stamping, staring, and furious gesticulation. In his dress there was a due conformity to his rank and high office:—he wore upon his finger, and loved to display, the ring given to him by Charles the Second for procuring the condemnation of Sir Thomas Armstrong, which had thence been, not inappropriately, termed his Blood-stone.

Colonel Kirk was a sleek, cold-blooded soldier, who had acquired in the army a gentlemanly appearance and deportment, and from his long service among the Moors, an utter indifference to human life, or rather a positive appetite for deliberate cruelty. From the climate in which he had served, his countenance, though not uncomely, was swarthy, excepting the upper part of his forehead, which having been always protected by his helmet, retained its original fairness. Notwithstanding their perfect identity of feeling and conduct, no two individuals could be less like one another than the Colonel and his friend, the Lord Chief Justice; the latter being naturally coarse, vulgar, and violent, but only cruel from interest or excitation; the



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former courteous, calm, and sneering, but constitutionally merciless.

The next arrival, after this illustrious pair, was one that excited not less amazement than alarm in the mind of Reuben, being no other than his uncle Goldingham, between whom and Lord Trevanian he had never imagined the smallest acquaintance to exist. In point of fact they had only encountered on the previous morning, at the house of Sir Carroll Crockatt, when his Lordship understanding that he was a new neighbour, and a good and loyal subject, had invited him to his party. Recognizing the ancient vehicle, and old Timothy, the driver, Reuben held himself aloof at the time of its arrival; but was sadly at a loss to know how he should conduct himself during dinner, so as to escape detection at the very moment when his head might be said to be in the lion's mouth. Recollecting, however, that his uncle was near-sighted, he determined to run all risks, to keep behind him as much as possible, and trust to the great alteration in his appearance since he had cut off his hair and assumed a servant's livery.

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To Helen and Adeline, Goldingham's visit was equally untoward and unexpected, and their anxiety was the more painful because it was allowed no vent: they had no means of communicating with Reuben, or even with one another, except by their looks; and Helen, in addition to all her other sources of uneasiness, was under the humiliating necessity of meeting her friend Emily, as well as Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, without being enabled to explain to them the mysterious circumstances in the painting-room closet, from which she was well aware that the two latter were drawing the most scandalous and derogatory inferences.

"Lord! Lord! what roads be these you have in Dorsetshire!" exclaimed Jeffreys, after the first ceremonies of introduction were over. "I have suffered more torments in my long ride hither, than ever were invented by the Dutch at Amboyna; and if I could find some of your surveyors upon my calendar, I would hang them without mercy, for none of them could deny their evil ways." The company laughed, as in safety bound when so formidable a personage

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attempted a joke. It was another of the Judge's drolleries, for he piqued himself upon being a wag, to call the ignorant Colonel Kirk his learned brother; and the soldier in return, in allusion to his friend's anomalous military appointment, invariably termed him "my Lord General," occasionally giving him the salute with a sneering, ironical gravity. "Thank God!" continued Jeffreys, reverting to the subject of the bad roads, "I shall soon turn my back upon the county, to give the kidnapping rogues at Bristol a lick with the rough side of my tongue; and I trust I shall be long enough remembered in Dorsetshire to prevent my being called back, at least upon any errand connected with rebellion."

"Are we soon to lose the benefit of your Lordship's presence?" inquired Lord Trevanian, looking as obsequious, and bending his head as much as his stiff nature and neck would allow him.

"Why ay, my Lord; I believe I have pretty nearly finished my Western campaign; and I fancy, brother Kirk, that I have crushed more of this beastly and rebellious mobile in court,

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than you have in the field. Cedant arma togæ. Eh! ha!"

"Why, I reckon, my Lord General, that I have disposed of a thousand of them, at least, either at Sedgemoor fight, or afterwards."

"That is not more than I have myself condemned to death, so we must divide the palm of victory, and have a joint triumph;—par nobile fratrum. Eh! ha! are we not, my learned brother?"

"Unquestionably, if you think so, my Lord General," answered Kirk, utterly ignorant what the words implied.

"Talk of Judges," continued Jeffreys,—"Lord! Lord! what are they, half of them, but timid, snivelling, sneaking, shilly-shally old women? I am the best that ever lived, ay, though I say it myself; for I have sentenced more rascals to death than all of them put together since the days of William the Conqueror. Scoundrel, villainous, dunghilly, tatterdemalion traitors and nonconformists, I have scoured them! Good Lord! what reason have the mobile to rebel against his most sacred

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and anointed Majesty, who has absolute power as God's Vicegerent upon earth! Have we not had enough of such damnable doings in the days of the blessed martyr King Charles the First? Eh, ha?"

"True, my Lord, very true indeed," said Lord Trevanian—"and with respect to this plea of religion which the fanatics set up——"

"Hang them!" interrupted Jeffreys—"country jobbernolls and dog-bolts, fit only to fiddle before a maypole, what should they know of religion? Let them read Bishop Cartwright, if they can, and learn the divine right of Kings, and the passive obedience of subjects. What! is not his most sacred Majesty to have his own notions in religion, while they are to keep theirs? The King would force no one. I have been closeted with his Majesty myself, and urged to turn Catholic, and yet he withdraws not his confidence from me, though I was deaf to his appeal, for I would do any thing in his service except abandon our holy Protestant religion."

"I also have had the honour of being

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closeted for the same purpose," said Kirk—"but I frankly told his Majesty that I was bespoken already, having promised my friend the Emperor of Morocco, if I ever changed my faith, to turn Mahometan. No, no, we are all, I trust, good and loyal subjects; but we will none of us abandon our holy religion."

It was characteristic of the age that two such remorseless and unchristian beings should especially pique themselves upon this point. The King had the same plea for violating his coronation oath; and the people at large, in their furious contests about the letter, were equally unmindful of the spirit of Christianity; so easily are men persuaded, as it has been well observed, to talk for religion, to write for it, wrangle for it, fight for it, suffer for it, die for it—to do any thing in short, but *live* for it.

Jeffreys talked for some time upon the prevailing topics of the day loudly and authoritatively, as one who from his high rank and superior information felt himself entitled to take the lead, and arrogate the attention of the company; and indeed his impetuous feelings

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generally supplied him with a fluent and impressive, though coarse, eloquence, which would have procured him willing listeners, even had he not been in a situation to command them. He seemed at length to have talked himself into an appetite, for turning to his host, he said, "Old Serjeant Maynard has defined the law to be '*Ars bablativa*,' of which I am affording you good evidence; but you must recollect, my Lord, that unless I eat my own words, which I was never disposed to do, I may sit here and talk till I starve. Mouths were made for good things to go into, as well as to come out of; I am not like a cherry-clapper that can live upon the wind, and still continue chattering. Lord! Lord! will people never learn to dine at a Christian hour? Had I been aware of this long fast, I might have better prepared for it, but I took nothing after my breakfast save a caudle with ambergris, and a plate of Buck's dowsetts, with a glass of spirit of clary."

Lady Trevanian expressed her regret at the delay, but assured him that the dinner would now be announced in a few minutes.

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"We were but three minutes after the time," resumed Jeffreys, "when I dined in the Town-Hall at Dorchester, and the Mayor blustered at the laggerd cooks like the four cardinal winds in a painting. Ha! that was truly an honourable dinner, and the more especially for birds, whereof we had quails, ruffs, gnats, godwitts, dotterel, wheatear, and the cock of the wood, which we washed down by drinking his Majesty's health in a lusty glass of flip, as big as King John's cup at Lynn, or John Calvin's at Geneva—one that would have satisfied even that kill-cow Sir John Shaw the Recorder."

Of this entertainment, which seemed to have tickled his palate in no ordinary degree, he was proceeding to give some farther details, when the dinner was at length announced by one of Reuben's fellow-servants; and his Lordship starting up with great alacrity, and assuming precedence of all the other guests as a matter of course, tendered his hand to Lady Trevanian, and escorted her to the dining-room.

Jeffreys, who was a voracious eater as well as an immane drinker, was presently too deeply

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engaged in the business of the table to mingle in the conversation, an interval of which Captain Trevanian took advantage to relate all the particulars of Monmouth's seizure, assuming to himself a greater share of that exploit than was strictly his due, and little dreaming that there was one at that moment standing behind his chair, who had been an eye-witness of the whole transaction. Anxious to show all possible honour to his illustrious guest, Lord Trevanian had requested several of his visitants to allow their servants to wait at table—a fact which had no sooner come to the knowledge of old Timothy, than he thought he might intrude himself among them, and obtain a peep at the judge, although he was not among the number of those who had been ordered to attend. Having seen his horses well supplied with provender, and given them in strict charge to one of the stable-boys, he accordingly marched boldly into the dining-room, in the thickest bustle of the feast, and immediately made his way to the sideboard. His practised eye presently detected that it had not been dressed and

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decorated by a professional hand; he observed Reuben, in his anxiety to avoid Goldingham's eye, loitering behind him in a more inactive manner than became a butler at such a busy moment, and finally, he saw him break a cork into a bottle, in his bungling efforts to extract it. All this was too much for one who had himself filled the same office for many years, and piqued himself upon his knowledge of its duties. "By my troggs! any boys will set themselves up for the shoulder-knot now-a-days," he exclaimed, as he cast a contemptuous look at Reuben. "Who made you a butler, I trow? when you can neither dress a board, nor draw a cork, nor wait at table, but go sneaking about the room like a dog that has thrown down a dish." Provoked at this ill-timed impertinence, Reuben tartly bade him mind his own business, or he would drag him out of the room by his goat's beard; the sturdy Timothy rejoined in a still louder tone, and his angry voice at length attracted the attention of Mrs. Chatsworth, who, after having glanced at Reuben, said in a whisper to Lady Trevanian, but loud enough

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for Helen and Adeline to hear, "I see your Ladyship has a new butler, and I protest he seems to be one of the handsomest young fellows I have ever seen. Have you had him long?"

"I do not recollect the exact time," replied Lady Trevanian; "but I know he came to me soon after the battle of Sedgemoor." The blood mounted into Adeline's cheeks at these words, and she looked at Helen with a self-betraying confusion that might have excited suspicion at a less busy and bustling moment.

"What is the young man's name? I must positively call him up to this end of the room," resumed Mrs. Chatsworth; who, upon receiving the required information, was evidently preparing to perform her purpose, when Helen, dreading her scrutinizing eyes, and the effect of thus drawing the attention of her neighbours to Reuben, suddenly asked her whether she had heard that her friend Miss Challenor's marriage was entirely broken off? "Is it? Is it?" she cried, with a look of malicious tri-

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umph; "then, I dare say, the story we heard was perfectly true after all; and I have no doubt the gentleman had excellent reasons for declining the honour." Raising her voice, she then called aloud, "Mr. Goldingham, have you heard the sad news about poor Miss Challenor?"

"Goldingham! Goldingham!" cried Jeffreys, who had now sufficiently appeased his hunger to be able to attend to what was passing; "where have I heard that name?" He took a small note-book from his pocket, having previously called for the tankard of lamb's-wool, which was brought to him by Reuben on a silver salver, and having glanced his eye over the page, he grasped the handle of the tankard, but without drawing it from the waiter, so as to keep Reuben a sort of prisoner by his side, and turning with a stern look to Lord Trevanion, he exclaimed, "Is this Mr. Goldingham the gentleman whose brass cannon were given up to the rebels without resistance? and whose nephew, one Reuben Apsley, as I

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see by my note-book, joined them immediately, took an active part in all their proceedings, and fled from the battle of Sedgemoor?"

"I had not the honour of Mr. Goldingham's acquaintance until yesterday," replied Lord Trevanion, with a look of solemn alarm,—"when Sir Carroll Crockatt avouched him to be a true and loyal subject; and I cannot therefore imagine that it is the same gentleman."

"With submission to both your Lordships," said Goldingham, "I am the person in question; and I dare maintain that Sir Carroll has spoken truly of me. Of the seizure of my cannon I knew nothing till they were gone; and no one can regret more deeply than myself the unfortunate delusion of my nephew. I made an immediate deposition of both circumstances——"

"Lord! Lord! and so would any one; a lobb, a goose, a widgeon, if he wanted a blinker wherewith to hoodwink justice," cried Jeffreys. "Look'ee, Sir!" he continued staring angrily and bawling; "it is the better sort that lead

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astray the blind and ignorant mobile: had we no seditious gentry, there would be no rebel armies—*cessante causâ tollitur effectus.* Your nephew is a dangerous young firebrand, a cankered traitor! Nay, Sir, frown not at me—

> 'I call a spade, a spade;—Eaton, a bully;
> Frampton, a pimp; and brother John, a cully.'

I have heard of his doings with that incurable rebel, Fludyer, who has once more, as we are told, slipped his neck from the noose, and found his way to Holland: but your nephew, this Reuben Apsley, we have reason to believe, is still lurking somewhere in the country; and if we catch him, he shall most assuredly swing for it! He shall wear a hempen-ruff, Sir—a Tyburn tippet, Sir! He shall take his last look through a halter, Sir!—ay, Sir, and his head shall be nailed over your hall-door, and his quarters be stuck up at the four corners of your park. And look to it yourself, Sir; for if he have any aiders or abettors, as he must have, they shall hang beside him, be they whom they may, like jewels in the ear of the gallows!"

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During the delivery of this furious and brutal ebullition, which, of course, attracted all eyes to the speaker, Reuben, unable to quit his side on account of the tankard, had no means of hiding his face but by turning round, and whispering to one of his fellow-servants, until the Judge wound up his tirade by a lusty draught, when he made his escape to the side-board in some little confusion, although gratified to learn that his friend Fludyer had safely reached the Continent. It was this circumstance, indeed, that had mainly excited his Lordship's wrath, and sharpened it against one whom he understood to have been his friend and bosom companion. Most fortunate was it that all looks were fixed upon Jeffreys; for Adeline was so utterly overcome, on hearing the fate denounced against aiders and abettors, that she could hardly retain her seat, and would probably have been frightened into hysterics, had she not been re-assured by the encouraging looks and the calm self-possession of Helen. All parties were silenced, if not alarmed, by the loud tone and blustering menaces of the

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Judge, except Goldingham himself; whose spirit was roused by this vulgar and violent assault upon him. In a voice as firm, though not quite so loud as that of Jeffreys, he defied him to fix a single charge of disloyalty upon him; to controvert the truth of what he had asserted; or prove him to have been either his nephew's instigator in the first instance, or his subsequent aider and abettor; adding, that he knew the respect due to his Lordship, but that knowing himself also to be innocent, he would not be bullied or brow-beaten by any man in England! As he concluded this speech, he fixed his large grey eyes upon his assailant with a stern look, and uttered a bold "Hem!" of defiance.

Jeffreys, who, like other bullies, immediately cowered and quailed before an intrepid adversary, declared in a more subdued tone, that he was happy to observe the gentleman's honest indignation, which he considered good evidence of his innocence; adding, that he now believed him to be clear of his nephew's guilt, and was quite sure no person of disloyal principles would dare



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to present himself within the walls of so good a subject, and so staunch a Tory as his honourable friend, the Lord Trevanian. To turn the attention of the company from this retractation, somewhat humiliating to one who had declared that he never ate his own words, he adroitly started another topic, and the conversation proceeded for a little while without any fresh ebullition from his irascible Lordship. This calm, however, was not doomed to continue. Some trifling difference of opinion having arisen between the Squire and Sir Carroll Crockatt, the latter proposed referring it to the decision of Sir Ambrose Jessop. "Whoop! that will never do," cried the Squire; "do you remember when he went a-hunting with us, and we came to Maplested Copse, round which the road winds on either side, and then joins again? sink me! if he didn't stand so long boggling which party to follow, and what road to take, that he was fairly thrown out. 'Sblood! that will be the way with him now,—we shall get no decision from him,—for Sir Ambrose is a regular Trimmer."

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Jeffreys, whose decisive character led him to detest those that wavered in their politics, invariably took fire at the very mention of this word:—"A Trimmer!" he exclaimed, "I have heard much of such a monster, but never saw one;—lean forward, Mr. Trimmer,—put forth your head, that I may know what such a creature is like;"—which taunts he followed up by one of his usual blustering invectives against all sneaking, milk-and-water politicians. Poor Sir Ambrose, almost frightened out of his wits, could only beg leave most solemnly to assure his Lordship, that he was of the same politics with the President of his Majesty's Council, the Marquess of Halifax; a defence, unfortunately, which rather aggravated than appeased his Lordship's wrath, for putting his thumbs in his girdle, he exclaimed, swaggeringly, "Tell me of my Lord Halifax!—tell me of a louse!"

Even Jeffreys himself seemed to be aware that there was some little indecorum in the phrase, and that, considering the company he was in, he had been exercising the rough side



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of his tongue rather too freely, for he assumed a more pleasant look and tone, and exerting the conversational powers which he possessed in considerable perfection, he quickly restored a comparative degree of harmony and good-humour to the company.

But an unlucky incident was destined once more to expose his choleric and hectoring temperament. Mention was casually made of one Hewlings, whom he had lately condemned to death, and whose case had excited considerable notice; when Jeffreys declared that the rebel's two sisters had made him ten minutes later than he should otherwise have been, for they had hung upon the wheels of his coach, imploring for their brother's life, and would not suffer him to proceed until he had ordered the coachman to lash them off with his whip. Honest Timothy, who happened to be standing behind him, and was scandalized at such a cruel office being imposed upon a brother of the whip, could not help muttering,—"By my troggs! had I been your coachman, I would

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have sent the lash in at the window, and not towards the wheels."

Enough of this speech was caught by Jeffreys to throw him into a towering passion, as with a torrent of abusive epithets he asked Timothy whose knave he was.

"Nobody's!" said Timothy, with a knowing wink, as if he were not to be entrapped into an admission of the epithet. One of the other servants, however, mentioned that he was Mr. Goldingham's coachman, a piece of information which seemed to revive all his Lordship's suspicions, for he fiercely exclaimed, "Ay, ay! I see how it is—like master like man. Scoundrel, villain, rascally, stinking old traitor! What? you knew nothing, I warrant, of your young master's joining the rebels, and have not helped to conceal him since; eh, ha?"

"No, my Lord, neither one nor t'other, and I'll swear it on the Bible," said Timothy firmly.

"Swear it, saucy knave! and what then? If your conscience is as large as your beard, you will swear any thing."

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"Nay, my Lord," replied Timothy, "if you go about to measure consciences by beards, there be some people have none at all."

The sly, yet sheepish expression with which he fixed his eyes upon the Judge's chin, and the half-suppressed snigger and jerk of the left shoulder, that accompanied his speech, were almost irresistibly ludicrous; and yet no one dared to laugh, except the Squire, who bawled out,—"Whoop! sink me, my Lord, but he had you there—haugh! haugh! haugh!"

Jeffreys's fury, inflamed by this sally, now fell upon Timothy in a Billingsgate strain, with which we dare not sully our pages, and the other servants, in obedience to the joint commands of Lord Trevanian and Goldingham, hurried him out of the room, the old man exclaiming, as they dragged him along, "Lash the poor young ladies over the arm. Shame! shame!" while Jeffreys kept pouring after him from the flood-gates of his scurrility, a continued stream of ranting and virulent abuse.

Once more did the Judge, as if conscious that he had betrayed too much intemperance

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of tongue, assume a more placable look, and a less burly and boisterous tone. Observing the stern expression that still lowered upon Goldingham's brow, he said, with as much suavity as his naturally arrogant manner would allow, "People cannot be too cautious, Mr. Goldingham, what servants they admit into their houses, now-a-days. This old greybeard of yours has the very stamp of a knave upon his features. *Cave quos Deus ipse notavit.* My Lord here, our noble host, would not, I dare avouch, receive any servant, except out of a loyal and true family. We should do well to imitate the example of Sir Jeoffry Palmer, sometime Attorney General, who would take no clerks but staunch Cavaliers, never spelt Oliver with a great O, and bought the manor of Charleton because his master's name sounded in it."

To the great joy of Helen and Adeline, as well as Reuben, this most turbulent and harassing dinner was now drawing to a close, and they were congratulating themselves in the thought of its having hitherto passed off without discovery

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and mischief, when an incident unexpectedly occurred, which placed them all three in the most imminent and harrowing jeopardy. Mrs. Chatsworth, determined to have a better view of Reuben's handsome face and figure, though she entertained not the remotest suspicion of his being other than he seemed, called him up by his assumed name of Norton, and held him for a minute or two by her side, while she gave him orders about some particular wine which she pretended to want. At this juncture Goldingham, who was immediately opposite, happened to fix his eyes upon him, and thrown completely off his guard by instantly recognizing his nephew, he struck the handle of his knife violently upon the table, ejaculating with starting eyes and a face of crimson—"Gracious Heaven!"

Adeline, who had marked the whole transaction, and concluded that all was over with her lover, fell back in her chair with an hysterical cry, screaming out, "He will be seized!—he will be seized!" Most fortunately for all parties, Helen too had noticed the occurrence;

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she gave Goldingham a significant glance, which recalled him in some degree to his self-possession, and seeing that there was no method of averting suspicion, but by increasing the general confusion, she started up, as if to assist Adeline, but in such a manner as purposely to upset a bottle of wine, of which the greater portion fell into Lady Crockatt's lap. Uttering a still louder scream than Adeline, her ladyship also started up, shaking off the remains of the obnoxious liquid, and exclaiming, "Eugh! I am wet through, and with my dreadful rheumatism! My drops, my drops! I shall be dead to-morrow!"

"I fear not," whispered Sir Carroll to his neighbour, shaking his head as he spoke.

Adeline's words had caught the attention of both Jeffreys and Kirk, whose senses were always on the *qui vive* for seizures, and both exclaimed, nearly at the same instant, "Who will be seized? Who is it that will be seized?"

A general and deep silence of a few seconds followed this question, until Lord Trevanian, standing up, said in a loud and solemn voice,



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"Miss Trevanian—Miss Adeline Trevanian—I command you to explain the meaning of this disturbance."

"My Lord," said Helen, "we both of us saw Mr. Goldingham apparently in imminent danger of choking; he turned so red in the face, and his eyes looked so dreadful, that Adeline, thinking, I presume, he was about to be seized with a fit, uttered an exclamation to that effect. I arose hastily, to offer my assistance, and in my agitation overturned a bottle of wine, an inadvertence for which I most earnestly implore the pardon of Lady Crockatt, while I intreat forgiveness of the whole company for the confusion I have so unintentionally occasioned."

Thus furnished with a cue, Goldingham began to cough, and call for water, and look as much as possible like a half-strangled person; declaring that he had never had so narrow an escape in his life, and observing how cautious people ought to be not to eat too fast.

"Lord! Lord!" cried Jeffreys; "I thought you City gentlemen, who could swallow the plot, who could believe that Sir Dudley North was to

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be skinned, stuffed, and hung up in Guildhall, and the Protestants to be boiled alive, would never find any thing stick in your throats; eh, ha? Perhaps, like Master Sheriff Bethel, the fanatic, you think the Fire of London was a judgment for gluttony, since it began in Pudding Lane and ended in Pie Corner; and have therefore so long kept Lent; that—"

"Was there ever such horrid selfishness as this?" interposed Lady Crockatt; "I am wet through—I am in agonies—I am dying—and nobody—Eugh! I shall faint—I shall expire! and that wretch, Crawley, has forgotten to put my salts in my pocket!"

"Helen! Adeline! attend her Ladyship instantly into my bed-room, and I will follow you in a few minutes," said Lady Trevanian. With an alacrity not easily to be described, did her daughters obey this injunction. Reuben was shortly after enabled to betake himself to the kitchen, agitated with the keenest emotion at his unexpected deliverance from the clutches of Jeffreys and Kirk, for he had considered himself lost; and penetrated with the most grate-

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ful admiration of Helen's intrepidity and presence of mind. Agreeably to her promise, Lady Trevanian and the remaining ladies soon after withdrew; Goldingham also, astounded at the discovery he had made, retired at an early hour, that he might deliberate how he should act in a dilemma not less puzzling than alarming; and the dining-room party were thus left to the uninterrupted prosecution of their Bacchanalian orgies.

Jeffreys was the first to set the example of deep potations to his boozing companions, although he affected at the outset a certain degree of moderation. "I remember," he said, exhibiting his ring, "that when his late blessed Majesty, who is now in Heaven, took this jewel from his own finger, he cautioned me, as the season was hot, not to drink too much; and I have ever since looked upon it as a Mentor, whose warning I must observe, or expect, like Prince Amurath, to be turned into a beast for neglecting it." The prickings, however, of this finger-conscience were soon disregarded, and the metamorphose he expected was fully realized.

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A narrow flint glass, of a yard long, being produced, he filled it with wine, infused into it an intoxicating preparation of the late King's, known by the name of Charles's Salutiferous Drops, a custom which he said he had originally learnt from poor Tom Chiffinch; and going down upon his knees, very piously drank the health of his most sacred Majesty, James the Second. This example, followed by all the others, served as a prelude to a succession of deep, unflinching draughts, whose effects soon became audible in the screeching riotous merriment of the party. The Squire whooped, and roared out his drinking songs like a Stentor. Jeffreys laughed amain. Tobacco and pipes were introduced, and as the topers quickly got beyond wine, bottles of spirit of clary, and Nantz brandy, with tankards of flip and punch, were clamorously called for, and madly quaffed. A fellow of the name of Montfort, who had been a comedian, and was kept by Jeffreys to amuse him in his drunken moods with mimicry and buffoonery, was now introduced to play off his antics before him; Chinnery and this zany sang obscene

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songs, or fawned upon him with the most fulsome flattery; and the great man, usually so haughty and distant even to his equals, pawed, and kissed, and slobbered these low wretches, with all the maudlin love of slavering and hiccoughing intoxication. Between one and two o'clock of the morning, such of the party as could still stand, a description which embraced only three or four besides Jeffreys and the Squire, got up to dance together. They reeled blindly about the room till they tumbled over one another; and the Lord Chief Justice was finally carried to bed by Lord Trevanian's servants, in a state of utter insensibility.

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## CHAPTER IV.

" My golden locks time hath to silver turn'd,
(Oh ! time too swift, and swiftness never ceasing !)
My youth 'gainst age, and age at youth hath spurn'd ;
But spurn'd in vain ; youth waineth by increasing.

My helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lover's lays shall turn to holy psalms ;
A man-at-arms must now sit on his knees,
And feed on prayers that are old age's alms."

Such a jolly dog and egregious drinker as the Judge had proved himself at the end of this carousal was sure to win the heart of the Squire, who termed him an honest, brandy-faced wassailer, a fine, swaggering kill-cow, a hot Burgundian, and a glorious, rantipole, unflinching toper, who, when he was once in for a

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drunken bout, saw the thing fairly out to the last. He would have gone over himself to Harpsden Hall, on the following morning, to pay his respects to such an exalted character, but that he had some engagement at home, and he therefore dispatched Chinnery to convey his compliments, and make inquiries concerning his Lordship's health. The ambassador was ill-selected, considering the party to whom he was deputed; and the manner in which he acquitted himself of his mission was precisely the last he should have adopted. Presuming upon the tipsy familiarity with which he had been hugged and kissed in their over-night's debauch, he ventured to address his Lordship in the same strain, complimenting him in slang language upon his powers of drinking, as well as his jovial freaks, and declaring that he had never laughed more heartily than when he saw him dancing about the room in his judge's wig.

"*Of* whom, and *to* whom are you speaking, sirrah? What lewd ribald, what filthy buffoon, what low-lived sot is this?" said Jeffreys, knitting his terrible brows, and assuming a look

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that was much more dignified than his language.

"I am Nick Chinnery, my Lord, that made the peppered devil last night, and set fire to the Nantz, and sang the song of Joan and the Parson, and mimicked the drunken fidler. Don't you remember me, my Lord?"

"No, fellow!" bawled Jeffreys, with a still fiercer look; "I can never have remembered thee, unless when I had forgotten myself. Avaunt! I know thee not."

The discomfited Chinnery slunk away, glad to escape from a voice and look that were equally terrific; and his Lordship, receiving a message from a gentleman who requested to speak with him upon a confidential and important affair, desired the servant to conduct him to some private apartment, where they might be safe from interruption. The other chambers being occupied, the parties were accordingly ushered into Helen's painting-room, and the business upon which they met being presently dispatched, the Judge soon after took leave of his host, called for his guards, mounted

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his state-coach, into which Colonel Kirk followed him, and drove away from Harpsden Hall, to the inexpressible relief of Reuben and his two young protectresses. It will not impeach the filial affection of the latter, considering the heartless distance at which their father had always held them, and the peril to all parties that resulted from his presence, if we add, that they were both gratified when he suddenly set off upon his return to London: to which place he was summoned by some of those petty ministerial intrigues in which he was perpetually dabbling, although the ruling powers saw through his selfish motives, and despised his officious zeal. The Captain had already betaken himself to his command at Lyme, and thus Harpsden Hall was restored to the quiet it had enjoyed before the arrival of these unwelcome visitants.

Goldingham was the first person who presented himself after their departure. From the expression of Helen's eye, he had seen at the time that she was privy to Reuben's concealment; and though he felt the deep responsi-

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bility he should incur by the smallest interference, especially after the ferocious menaces of Jeffreys, his curiosity as well as his interest in Reuben's fate determined him to pay a visit to Lady Trevanian, in the hope of procuring a separate interview with Helen, and obtaining some clue to the mystery of his nephew's present disguise and future plans. In the former expectation he was not disappointed; he was enabled to converse apart with Helen, but she would only assure him that she was no party, in the first instance, to Mr. Apsley's assuming Lord Trevanian's livery; that another person had revealed to her who he was; that she was aware of the penalty of death to which she was liable, and resolved to encounter it rather than betray him; but that there was no necessity for involving others in the vital responsibility that attached to herself, especially as she had already supplied him with money, which was all that Goldingham himself could do for his assistance. "Let this be the last time that we ever open our lips to one another upon the subject," said Helen, "until we

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can both do so with perfect safety, and when that is the case, but not until then, I will consent to your repaying me the loan that I have advanced to Mr. Apsley.

"Madam, I respect you with all my heart and soul, for you are a woman of noble feeling, and, what is much more rare, you are a woman of business, Madam; hem!" Although he thought this the very highest eulogy he could bestow, Goldingham was proceeding with other acknowledgments; but as their object had withdrawn, curtsying, and with her finger to her lips, he returned to his own house, determined not to leave to her the whole responsibility, which she so generously volunteered to assume; but to prepare some plan, if possible, for his nephew's escape, and contrive to give him information of it as soon as it should be matured. What this was to be it would require time and thought to decide, but he had an unbounded confidence in the omnipotence of money; and knowing his own wealth, he did not by any means despair of succeeding in his purpose.

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Ever prone to yield to the impulse of the moment, Reuben was flattering himself upon his present comparative security, abandoning himself to the happiness of living under the same roof with Helen, and indulging in visionary hopes and reveries, which his critical plight by no means warranted, when a new danger was threatening him, which, but for the watchful solicitude and prompt assistance of Grace, the Anabaptist girl, might have quickly given him a prison instead of Harpsden Hall, for the scene of his delusive dreams. His inexpertness in his office, his holding himself aloof from the kitchen society, as well as his superior manners, conversation, and appearance, had combined with a variety of minute circumstances, to excite suspicion in two of his fellow-servants, one of whom procured a list of the fugitives for whose apprehension a reward had been offered, and studied it with his comrade, in the hope of discovering, by the descriptions it contained, whether the pretended butler might not be identified as a proscribed rebel. Though they could not succeed in this object,

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the chance of a reward determined them to have him arrested and examined; arguing that it would not injure him, if innocent, while it would materially benefit themselves if their misgivings were confirmed. Of this printed list Grace obtained a glimpse; and her faculties being quickened by the deep interest she now took in Reuben's safety, she watched the parties in whose hands she had seen it; and divining from their whisperings and gestures, as well as from a few words which she accidentally overheard, their treacherous intentions, she communicated them to Reuben, urging his immediate flight from Harpsden Hall, and strenuously recommending her father's residence as being admirably adapted for his temporary concealment, while its vicinity to the sea rendered it no less eligible for his final escape.

Roused by this intelligence from the pleasant entrancement in which he had suffered his faculties to luxuriate, Reuben, reproaching himself for his inertness, resolved to atone for his procrastination by tearing himself instantly away, without further implicating Helen or

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Adeline, by making them acquainted with his present departure or future purposes. To avert suspicion, it was arranged that he should steal out of the house at daybreak on the following morning, which was Saturday, conceal himself in a particular plantation, and remain there till the evening; at which period Grace always had permission to visit her father, and remain with him until the Sunday. In her way home she promised to meet him at the plantation, and guide him in the gloom of evening to the farm, which was situated in a hollow of the Downs, at an easy distance from Harpsden Hall. All this was executed as it had been planned. Resuming the clothes that he had worn when he first betook himself to the Wood-house, concealing his pistols about his person, for he was still determined not to be taken alive, if he could avoid that fate, and carrying with him the Bible which he was to deliver to Grace's father, Reuben decamped from the house at the dawn of day, hurried to the specified plantation, secreted himself as well as he could, and patiently awaited the arrival of the pious and

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enthusiastic girl, in whose hands he had now placed his life. Just as the sun was setting behind the trees in which he was embowered, he saw her approaching with a basket in her hand, and went forward to meet her as soon as she had entered the covert. She expressed great joy at seeing him, told him that his mysterious disappearance from Harpsden Hall had excited no small astonishment, and apprised him that they must remain where they were until it was quite dark, so as to elude all observation on their way to the farm. With the trusting confidence of a heart so utterly void of guile in itself as not even to suspect its existence in others, she sate down beside Reuben in that sequestered brake, while the night was closing fast around them, first putting up prayers for his safety, and then beguiling the time by giving her companion a brief outline of her father's history, invariably speaking of him in terms of the deepest reverence, and seldom mentioning his name without invoking a blessing upon his head.

Malachi Wardrop, though now living in a

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cottage with his son-in-law, a poor sheep-farmer, had once possessed a competency which he had cheerfully sacrificed in the cause of the Parliament, at the beginning of the Civil Wars, and quarrelling with Cromwell on his usurping the supreme power, had disdained to seek any opportunity of repairing his losses. The Restoration found him broken in fortune, but not in his spirit, which was irreconcilably opposed to the new government, both upon religious and political grounds. Not that he was infected by any of the crazy dreams of the Fifth-Monarchy-men, and similar enthusiasts. Though an Anabaptist he was no fanatic, unless his political opinions might subject him to that imputation, holding, as he did, that a great and enlightened nation could never have been intended by Providence to become the patrimony of any particular family, however weak or wicked, and to be bequeathed from father to son like a herd of cattle. He was in fact a staunch Republican, towards the establishment of which form of government he had fought and intrigued from the time of Charles the



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First, nearly up to the death of Charles the Second; for he had been more or less concerned in all the conspiracies of the latter plot-producing reign, provided they offered any chance, however remote, of subverting the existing tyranny. To most of the leaders of the different factions he was well known, with some of them deeply implicated, his long impunity amid such dangerous enterprizes being mainly attributable to his cultivating a farm in the vicinity of the metropolis, which he never quitted except at night, and to which he invariably returned before the following morning; so that in the country he was thought to be a plodding husbandman, while in London his face was unknown amid the daily haunts of the disaffected. This course of life he had pursued until, from some complaint in his eyes, originally contracted in his Parliamentarian campaigns, he had fallen totally blind, when he accepted the invitation of his son-in-law, a humble sheep-farmer in Dorsetshire, and took refuge in his cottage. Three children accompanied him; —Grace, Joel, and a poor idiot boy, with whom

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he was afflicted in addition to his other misfortunes; but neither blindness, age, poverty, nor domestic sorrows could break, or even bend, the invincible fortitude of his soul. Helpless as he had now become, he was not a whit the less anxious to work out the deliverance of his country; he "bated no jot of heart or hope," but endured all with a firmness more unalterable than ever was evinced by ancient Stoic or Spartan, because both were strangers to that religious enthusiasm by which his soul was sustained.

As his married daughter was now able to wait upon him, and minister to his infirmities, Grace, who had hitherto filled that office with an exemplary piety, accepted a service at Lady Trevanian's, for the purpose of relieving, in some little degree, the poverty that oppressed them, and of procuring for her blind parent such comforts as his unfortunate condition more especially required. Although so much depended upon Joel's assistance in the farm, his father had instantly dispatched him to join the Protestant army under Monmouth, never ima-



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gining that when the Duke professed himself to be the champion of liberty and religion, he merely meant to substitute one despot for another. The idiot son, whose real name was Matthew, but who from his habit of strutting about with a crown of rushes upon his head, had received from the boors and boys in the neighbourhood, and had himself adopted, the nickname of Charley, was the same that had assisted Reuben in the liberation of Norry Molloy, as recorded in our first volume.

It was a dark blustering night, and the wind, rushing past them in sudden gusts, seemed to be proclaiming with its ominous voice an approaching storm, when Reuben and Grace, crossing the high open Downs in the direction of the sea, made their way towards the farm, situated in a natural glen, of which the sides had been excavated and scarped for the purpose of procuring chalk, until the whole place presented the appearance of an extensive pit, surrounded by a precipitous wall, except where a narrow and steep road had been left for the entrance. To prevent cattle or the wayfarers

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of the night from falling into the abyss, of which the sides were perpendicular, it was surrounded by hurdles at top, and a similar fence was now placed across the abrupt sloping road, for the purpose of securing the sheep who had been folded in the Pit Farm, (as this sunken homestall was termed,) because it afforded them a better shelter against the impending storm. Grace lifted up one of the hurdles, and replaced it when Reuben had entered, who had to pick his way through the thickly clustered and sleeping sheep as they approached the dwelling. This was not so quietly effected but that three or four shaggy dogs rushed out open-mouthed to interrogate the intruders; and although at the first sound of Grace's voice they silenced their own, and greeted her with every mark of endearment, they closely followed Reuben with a suspicious eye and bristling mane, that indicated they were by no means reconciled to him, and felt it their duty to keep him under a strict surveillance. One-half of a long straggling barn had been boarded off and converted into a dwelling,

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containing a few rude apartments; the remaining portion was still appropriated to its original purpose, presenting a motley assemblage of hay, and other produce of the farm, crooks, shears, spades, and various implements of husbandry; a stall for a cow, a sty for pigs, and a pen for such sheep and lambs as it was desirable to keep separate; while the rafters were plumed with roosting poultry of all sorts. Through this portion was the entrance to the house, or rather to that division of the barn which was tenanted by human inhabitants. As Reuben passed these various quadrupeds, all sleeping in their respective dormitories, his eye long conversant with the stately chambers, gilt mouldings, costly mirrors, and marble statues of Harpsden Hall, was struck by the contrast of the present scene, which suggested to his imagination the homeliness and simplicity of the patriarchal times. Grace's married sister, who had heard them approaching, opened the door to receive them, holding up her finger as she curtsied to Reuben, and begging him in a whisper

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not to make a noise, since her father had just fallen asleep.

They accordingly proceeded in silence through a room used as a kitchen, over whose fire-place Malachi's old but well-furbished sword and fire-lock were suspended, into the sitting apartment or parlour, which was fitted up with great neatness, and afforded abundant evidence of Grace's singular skill in needlework and embroidery. The chair-cushions were worked in coloured cottons with subjects from the Church history, and explanatory texts in the margin; samplers of a similar description decorated the walls; and even the petticoat that her sister wore, and the collar of her little boy's shirt, had been made Scriptural by the same indefatigable and pious semstress. On the walls were also affixed rude engravings of the persecutions which the Protestants were then enduring in France, wherein the artist appeared determined not to weaken the moral by any diminution of the cruelties said to be inflicted upon them. These rude prints were widely circulated at the moment, as an

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instructive warning of what the people were to expect, should they suffer the King to proceed in his tyrannical attempts at converting his subjects, and were perhaps as influential in preparing the Revolution, as the celebrated song of Lillibullero was in precipitating it. Under one of these graven mementoes the idiot had coiled himself up on the floor, betraying by a vacant smile that he recognized Grace, as she entered, while he pointed to his sleeping father as if to explain his silence. No sooner, however, had he discovered the basket which his sister carried, and in which she occasionally brought him scraps of cake and savoury relics from Harpsden Hall, to afford him the only gratification his unfortunate nature would allow, than he started hastily up, and devoured the welcome prize with a gluttonous avidity.

But the principal object of Reuben's attention was the father, although but little of him could now be seen, his daughter having spread a handkerchief over his head, to protect him while he slept from the wind, which the casements of the rude cottage could not effectually

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exclude. His body was thrown into shade from the position in which he sat, but the light of a candle fell full upon his right hand, extended over a Bible upon a table beside him, and Reuben gazed upon it with a feeling that nearly amounted to reverence. Its proportions indicated a man of almost Herculean force and stature, the prominent sinews and muscles attesting the strength of the cordage by which the solid bones were lashed together, while the thick black hairs curled over them, like the tendrils of ivy wreathed around the root of some mighty oak as it grapples the earth with its gnarled fingers. That is the athletic hand, thought Reuben to himself, which has wielded the victorious sword in many a hard fought field, from Newbery fight to the battle of Worcester;—that is the hand which has guided the plough through fair weather and foul, ere the sun has become visible, except to the rejoicing lark in the sky, and after his setting has been announced by the bat and the owl;—there, too, is the hand which has been pressed by the illustrious Russel and Algernon Sydney, who, as I



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have learnt from his daughter, did not disdain to honour a moral and religious patriot with their friendship, although he was a humble tiller of the earth.

Such were the reflections passing through his mind when the old man awoke, drew himself upright in his chair, and removed the handkerchief with which he was covered. The effect upon Reuben was impressive, even to awfulness, for his figure appeared almost gigantic when he sat upright; and as he slowly unveiled his grand and venerable head, it seemed as if one of the ancient patriarchs were revealing himself once more upon earth. His beard, which he had suffered to grow since the death of his patron Sydney, was grizzled and of wiry texture, his high bald forehead was rippled with successive wrinkles, the deep lines of his face might almost be termed furrows, his complexion was sunburnt and weather-beaten;—but the moral beauty remained uninjured by the ravages of time, the countenance was unbroken, it exhibited the same stern resolution, and inflexible fortitude which had stimulated him in

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his youth, and now upheld him in his old age. Even the blighting of all his earthly hopes had not disturbed the serene severity of his brow. He might be compared to some rocky statue of Egypt, which, although sands and solitude have desolated the fair prospects by which it was once surrounded, still rears its head from out the waste, unaltered by the lapse of time, or the vicissitudes of fate. His sightless orbs awakening the idea of physical helplessness, amid all these indications of moral power, afforded a touching evidence of the misfortunes to which the noblest nature is liable, and tempered the effect of his somewhat stern physiognomy, by exciting in the beholder a feeling of compassion as well as reverence.

"Did I not hear the gentle voice of my daughter?" inquired the old man.

"I am here, my dear father," said Grace, kneeling at his feet; when he put both his hands upon her head, and having solemnly blessed her, raised her up, and kissed with great affection, exclaiming, "Grace! Grace! I may no longer say with Ezekiel, that you are the de-

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light of mine eyes, but methinks since I have ceased to see you outwardly, I love you more tenderly within, and may call you, with greater truth than ever, the darling of my heart."

His daughter again embraced him, and proceeded to state that she had brought to their humble Zoar, as to a place of refuge, the youth who had received the dying breath of their beloved Joel. "He is right welcome to our abode, even as were the angels to the house of Lot," said the father, stretching out his muscular hand, and grasping that of his guest with a force that almost painfully expressed the cordiality of his reception. "Where is my brave Joel's Bible? He swore to me that he would uphold its pure doctrine against the tyrant—the Nebuchadnezzar who would set up idols in Babylon, or that he would die the death of the righteous; and he has redeemed his pledge like a true soldier of the Lord." Reuben having put the Bible into his hands, he pressed it against his heart, and repeatedly kissed it with great fervour, ejaculating, "My brave, my pious Joel! As the apple-tree among the trees of

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the wood, so was my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. A wise son makes a glad father, and shall I not rejoice that mine who was ever wise upon earth, is now with the Lord in glory?" He then called upon Reuben to recount minutely all that he had seen of his boy's exploits in the battle, and to recapitulate his dying words, to the recital of which he listened in silence, but not without deep emotion, for a fierce, and almost terrible energy sat upon his features while his guest related the progress of the fight. Had he been present at the scene described, his countenance could scarcely have responded to it with a more vehement agitation. With these stern and lofty feelings Grace sympathized, as she had done when she first heard her brother's valorous achievements; again, however, melting into tears when the course of the narrative brought him before her prostrate and bleeding, and with his last breath transmitting to his parent the Bible on which her eyes were then fixed, and which had so lately been clasped

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by the hands of the dying Joel. In vain did she endeavour to suppress her grief; her father heard her sob, and solemnly rebuking her for repining at the will of Heaven, he threw himself suddenly upon his knees, clasped his hands together, and turning up his blank orbs, ejaculated with a pious fervour, "Take him, Lord, take him! I resign him to thee as joyfully as Abraham prepared to offer up his son Isaac. He is thy son now, not mine: he has exchanged an earthly for a heavenly father. I would rather be the parent of my dead Joel, than possess the fairest among the living sons of men. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Unable to subdue her grief, and fearful of offending her father by its continuance, Grace withdrew quietly from the apartment, when the old man, after this ebullition of proud piety had subsided, remained silent for some time and motionless. After a considerable pause, he roused himself, and exclaimed, "But the day of retribution and regeneration shall still come; the blood of his slaughtered saints shall not

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cry to the Lord in vain. He will not suffer this noble country to become the slave of the world and a land of graven images. This brave people, which were the first to bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in fetters of iron. This new Jerusalem which would have built up the finest edifice of religion and liberty that the world ever saw, had not the crafty Cromwell stolen like a serpent into the garden of our freedom, and ruined all. We shall not for ever be bitter with hard bondage—the Lord will hear our voice—'To your tents, O Israel!' will be the one cry of the nation, and the oppressor shall be driven forth like the false prophets Ahab and Zedekiah." Another pause ensued, when he continued, "Yes, it shall come, it shall come, though I may not live to witness the salvation of my country; for, alas! the boldest of our saints laid down their lives with my beloved Joel upon the bloody field of Sedgemoor; and we have no patriots left, since I followed to the scaffold the noble Russel, and my friend and patron the brave and good Algernon Sydney."

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In the hope of withdrawing his mind from the consideration of his recent loss, Reuben questioned him touching the execution of these two illustrious personages, and Malachi, who was proud of having known them, and loved to discourse upon their patriotic projects and unhappy fates, enlarged upon both with a mournful complacency.—By this time Grace had returned, and seated herself beside her poor idiot brother, who loved her as fondly as his nature would allow, in return for a thousand little kindnesses and attentions which she seized every opportunity of lavishing upon him. Boisterous and violent as he sometimes was when teazed by the neighbouring boys, or when any of the rustics unfeelingly plied him with liquor, that they might witness his turbulent antics, he was perfectly quiet and harmless at home; generally conforming to the habits of the family, and even to the prevalent mood of their minds, with a voluntary docility. Having presented to him another scrap of cake, which she had kept back that he might not devour too much at once,

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Grace, who was never idle, betook herself to her scriptural embroidery, occasionally stealing glances at Reuben as he sate beside her father, or suspending the action of her needle when he spoke, lest the rustling of her work should occasion her to lose a single accent that fell from his lips. An old grey sheep-dog, blind like himself, and therefore a greater favourite with Malachi, was seated at his feet, lifting up its head and its sightless eyes, and pointing its ears while he spoke, as if listening to his discourse. Such was the position of the little groupe while the venerable old man, in a deep and solemn voice, related the seizure, trial, and execution of the two chief martyrs, as he termed them; concluding his narrative by observing, that when Lord Russel went to the scaffold, the spectators, who were encouraged as they beheld his calm and dignified countenance, melted into tears when they looked at the sympathising faces of one another. But when Sydney, with the fine intrepid face of an ancient Roman, his long hair whitened by fatigues and studies, not by age, walked with a firm

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step, and an air of grandeur, to the place of execution, followed only by two of his brother's servants; when he ascended the scaffold with the erect posture and bold brow of one who came to command rather than to suffer, Englishmen wept not for him as they had done for Lord Russel. Taught by this noble example that death was only painful to cowards and the guilty, their nerves were strung and fortified—they felt an unusual grandeur and elevation of mind; their pulses beat high, and their hearts swelled indignantly within them as they looked upon him. "But the spirit of religion and liberty has not died with him," said the old man; "there be men even yet living, men who have fought and bled in the war of the Parliament, and the good old cause, who inherit his opinions, and have taught their children that Israel must be a republic if its sons are ever to enjoy peace, freedom, and the true faith."

Reuben was well aware that the speaker might be set down as one of those sturdy and staunch republicans who had stuck to his political as inflexibly as to his religious creed,

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through a long and disheartening course of years, and he thought to himself that if the poet Milton might be said to typify the intellectual spirit of the Puritans, their constancy, valour, piety, and dauntless love of liberty could not be more aptly and honourably represented than in the person of the venerable old soldier, Malachi Wardrop. That they should both be blind seemed to render them the more fitting personifications, for their cause was at that moment dark, and trampled down, like themselves, and labouring under evil days and heavy afflictions.

Just as Malachi had finished his narrative, his son-in-law entered the room, and happening to mention something that was to be done at Christmas, the old man indignantly interrupted him by exclaiming, "Christ-mass! let it be Christ-tide, Sir, I pray you. To unite two such words is to marry a Seraph to a fallen angel. We have masses and mass-houses enough already; ay, and the land will be covered with them if the tyrant be not smitten in his career. Even to profane our mouths with such abo-

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minations is to imitate the crime of Belshazzar, who drank to his idols out of the holy vessels brought from the temple of Jerusalem."

To beguile the long and heavy hours of blindness, or, perhaps, in his sturdy love of independence, that he might be less indebted to the time and attentions of others, he had taught himself to spin; after a rude and imperfect fashion, indeed, but still sufficient to occupy him, and even to earn a few pence, which were ever the perquisite of his poor Matthew, the idiot boy. It was the office of the latter to bring him his wheel, which he now placed before him, and his venerable father presently set it in motion, looking like a Hercules at the distaff; but as he was free from that hero's effeminacy of motive, he seemed to ennoble even a housewifely employment by the solemnity of his look, and the elevation of his sentiments. With whatever topic of discussion he might start, his ruling passion still brought it round eventually to the maintenance of Sydney's and his own favourite doctrine—the necessity of a republic. Speaking upon this

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subject, he alluded with admiration to the behaviour of Rumbold, recently executed for his participation in the Rye-House Plot, who declared upon the scaffold that he would never believe in the necessity of Monarchy until he saw that the many came into the world saddled and bridled, and the few with whips and spurs to ride them; adding, that if every hair of his head were a man, he would venture them all in the good old cause.

While the old man was most energetically declaring his full participation in these sentiments, his two daughters prepared and brought in the supper, a homely though sufficing repast, wherein no luxury was to be seen but that which is the greatest of all—a perfect cleanliness, and such a scrupulous neatness of arrangement as imparted to the frugal board an air that might almost be termed elegant. At this meal were assembled the whole household, with the exception of the little boy who was in bed; and after its conclusion had been sanctified by a thanksgiving from Malachi, the party betook themselves to prayers. These were

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generally performed by Grace on the nights when she was at home, and to Reuben's eyes there was something touching in the spectacle of this united family falling upon their knees and offering their prayers together, and sending up their voices to Heaven out of a deep pit in the midst of the wild and lonesome downs. In this act of devotion the poor idiot decorously joined, although perhaps ignorant of its import; while the sheep-dogs, of which there were now four or five in the same room, seemed to be perfectly aware that they were to couch quietly down, and not disturb the proceedings of the little congregation. After having read a chapter in the Bible, Grace prayed extemporaneously, stringing together parallel passages from Scripture in an exclamatory style, and without any very apparent aim, until she implored protection for the stranger and sojourner within their gates—that he might escape from the snare of the fowler—that he might not be afraid for the terror by day, nor for the arrow that flieth by night; when she spoke as one inspired, pouring forth her inter-

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cessions with a fervour, an unction of spontaneous and impassioned eloquence, that excited not less surprise than gratitude in the party for whom such earnest supplications were offered up to Heaven. In conclusion, she besought fortitude for the whole family, that they might patiently endure the loss of their beloved Joel, on whom she attempted to pronounce a panegyrick, but her feelings, softened, perhaps, by the tenderness of her previous appeal in behalf of the stranger within their gates, would not allow her to conclude. Her voice faltered and broke—her black eyes, upturned to heaven, became dim with tears, her bosom heaved, she sobbed, and was utterly unable to proceed.

"What means this weakness, child?" inquired her father, in a solemn voice; "are we to upbraid the Lord that he has exalted our Joel, and made him one of the saints in Heaven? Most dear, indeed, he was to all of us, and well did he deserve that we should record his praises, but with firmness, with exultation, with gratitude—not with the voice of lamentation. Dry up, therefore, those accusing tears, and

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silence those accents of rebellious sorrow, while I endeavour to complete what you have begun." By struggling with her feelings, Grace quickly succeeded in subduing all audible expressions of her grief, and her father took up the theme which she had been obliged to abandon, speaking in proud and glowing terms of his boy's constant devotion to God—of his benevolence to all his fellow-creatures—of his patient industry at home—of his courage in the field of battle—of his holy and triumphant death. In noticing his last moments he drew from his bosom and kissed the Bible which had been transmitted to him, enlarging with all the affectionate garrulity of a fond father upon his filial piety in this and numerous other instances, which he proceeded to recapitulate. This retrospect, however, by recalling to his mind all the various acts of duty and attention that he had received from his son, gradually melted and overcome his heart, which, although it was of a stern and rugged nature, and fortified by a deep feeling of Christian resignation, was still that of a most devoted father. His accents at length became

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tremulous and faltering, as his daughter's had done before him: he coughed and resumed his discourse, but his voice repeatedly broke. Indignant at himself that he should fall into the very error he had been rebuking in Grace, he paused, apparently resolved to conquer a weakness which he held to be at once culpable and unmanly. His feelings as a Christian and as a parent, were contending for the mastery within him, and it became obvious that the struggle was a convulsive one. With firmly compressed lips he strove to refuse a vent to his emotions—to suppress the rising grief—but his efforts, vehement as they were, could not succeed; the muscles of his mouth were agitated by spasmodic movements, his lips were involuntarily drawn up and down, and at length the pent-up tears gushed from his blind eyes, flowed down the furrows of his cheeks, and rained upon his grizzled beard.

At this affecting sight, Grace's emotion, which had been suspended, not subdued, broke out in a passionate burst of hysterical sobs; whilst the rest of the party gave an uninter-



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rupted vent to their grief, not even excepting the poor idiot, who caught the contagion without thoroughly comprehending the cause of the general sorrow, and sate in a corner sobbing aloud. When she had a little recovered from her paroxysm, Grace, seeming to think that some apology was due to Reuben for its indulgence, pointed to her father, exclaiming, "It is so dreadful—so heart-breaking, to see tears flowing from blind eyes! to think that they should express anguish when they can no longer afford delight or even assistance!—it is too—too—." Her words were again checked: she threw herself into her father's arms, and affectionately embracing him, implored him to be comforted. His other children approached him with supplications of a similar nature; but Malachi, receiving their tender endearments in silence, seemed to consider himself humiliated; that he had been wanting to himself as a Christian, and had evinced an unbecoming weakness as a man. Without further noticing their condolences, he bade them good night: blessed them, and extending his broad hand against

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the wall, groped the way alone and in silence to his bed-room.

Reuben was then conducted by the son-in-law to his humble dormitory; which, although it was but a loft, supplied with a pallet, presented the same air of neatness that he had observed in the little parlour, and seemed to prove propitious to the slumbers of its inmates; for he had scarcely laid himself down when he closed his eyes, and slept more soundly than he had ever done beneath the roof of Harpsden Hall.



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## CHAPTER V.

"Cruel you be who can say nay,
Since ye delight in others' woe;
Unwise am I, ye well may say,
For that I trusted to you so:—
But blameless I, who could not choose
To be enchanted by your eye;
But ye to blame, thus to refuse
My service, and to let me die."

GEORGE PUTTENHAM.

AT an early hour on the following morning, Reuben arose from his humble couch, and betook himself to the parlour, in which none of the family had yet made their appearance, except the little boy, Malachi's grandson. He had a hoop in his hand, and was gazing earnestly out of the casement upon the bleating sheep, which his father, assisted by his dogs,

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was turning out of the enclosure in the midst of a heavy rain. To Reuben's apprehensions it seemed that the lad was regretting his morning's scamper upon the Downs, of which the descending torrent offered him no immediate hope; and in this belief he said, patting him on the head, "This is a bad morning for you, my young friend."

"Not at all, Sir; it is just the weather I like," replied the child.

"And why so, my lad?"

"Because it is just the weather that God Almighty likes," was the answer; given in a tone, and with a look of simple and childish, and therefore the more impressive, reverence.

"That's my good and pious boy!" ejaculated Malachi, who just then entered the room, leaning upon his daughter's arm; "Grace! give him a handful of whortleberries out of the broken pitcher.—Come hither, boy; kneel down, and let me bless thee! Doth not this rebuke us? Behold! out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hath he ordained wisdom: while I, that am grey with years, wayward and

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rebellious as I am, must kick against the Lord, like Jeshurun." He seemed not yet to have forgiven himself for the disobedient weakness he had betrayed last night; and sate apart, ruminating in a stern silence, while the family were assembling for the morning's prayers. These were again performed by Grace; but with a perfect solemnity and self-possession; and without any reference to that recent bereavement by which her father's feelings and her own had been so distressingly overcome.

After the conclusion of the breakfast, which was served in the same tempting style of nicety as the supper, the different members of the family dispersed to their customary employment; and Malachi, solacing himself with a pipe, the only luxury in which he indulged, fell into conversation with Reuben on the subject of his escape. Money he considered to be the main requisite; and having ascertained that this was not wanting, he declared that, in his opinion, the difficulties might easily be surmounted, since his son-in-law who knew most of the fishermen upon the coast, could easily ascer-

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tain which of them were disposed to make a golden voyage to Holland, and by stealing down to the shore in the night-time, Reuben might embark, and get away in spite of the King's cruisers, which were only partially stationed here and there.

While they were thus consulting together, Grace came to take leave of her father, preparatory to her return to Harpsden Hall. Malachi kissed and solemnly blessed her, and she then turned to Reuben, and bade him adieu, declaring with a modest tenderness, that she should pray for his safety every night and morning, and expressing her hope, in her usual scriptural language, that when they next met it would be under happier circumstances.

"If the Amalekites and the Philistines, that now oppress the children of Israel, and seek his life, are still to trample upon us," said Malachi, "it were best to pray that he may safely cross the great waters, and that you may never see him more."

"If this be the best for his safety, this shall be my hearty prayer," said Grace; but her

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looks and accents betrayed that, although such a supplication might be sincere, it would hardly be made without an effort, for her tones became tremulous, her piercing black eyes were suffused, and the colour suddenly flushing to her cheeks, again left them more delicately wan than ever. She knew not the meaning of her own sensations, she would have been the very last person to suspect it, but conscious that she was confused, and anxious to escape observation, she hurried away ere Reuben had concluded his fervent acknowledgments for her friendly offices. Scarcely, however, had she reached the top of the steep ascent leading to the Downs, when she suddenly turned back, and ran down the declivity at full speed, and with a totally altered countenance. The pale, placid, and melancholy-looking girl could scarcely be recognized, as with a reddened face and neck, distended veins, and a fierce alarm flashing from her eyes, she declared that she had seen a party of soldiers evidently making for the farm. At the first intimation that enemies were approaching, her father had groped

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his way into the kitchen, and taking down his formidable sword that hung over the fire-place, stalked forth towards the road of approach, erecting his gigantic figure, grasping his weapon as if he would crush the handle, and wearing a terrible energy upon his features as he cried out, "I am blind like Samson, but I will not be bound with cords to make sport for mine enemies. Let me die with the Philistines! let me die with the Philistines!" Any dissuasions founded upon the self-sacrifice he was thus uselessly courting, Grace did not attempt to advance, because she knew they would be ineffectual, but by reminding him that such desperation would only excite suspicion, lead probably to the discovery of their guest, and certainly involve his family in destruction, he suffered himself to be conducted back to the house, and exchanged the sword for the spinning-wheel, repeatedly ejaculating, "His watchmen are blind—they are dumb dogs that cannot bark!"

His idiot son, in the meanwhile, had no sooner learnt that the farm was menaced by the



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soldiers, than he armed himself with a pitch-fork, and marching up and down before the closet that contained his favourite whortleberries, ejaculated with great energy, "Charley fight for his whortleberries! Charley die for his whortleberries!" as if he thought the invaders could have no other object than to possess themselves of this luxurious store. Although he presented an appearance at once painful and ludicrous, his fantastical demeanour suggested to Grace an expedient for the escape of their guest, which might not perhaps have otherwise occurred to her.

After a short consultation with her own agitated thoughts, she desired Reuben to hurry up into the loft where he had slept, and change clothes with her idiot brother, whom she dispatched after him for that purpose. Matthew was no sooner equipped in his new habiliments, than she explained her purpose, (for as she had always had him under her care, she had a clue to his apprehensions,) and bidding him make for the gap at Abbot's Point, and not suffer himself to be caught by the party whom she pointed out to him, he set off

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instantly in the direction of the sea, proud of his commission, and eager to oblige one to whom he was more attached than to any thing else upon earth.

The feint succeeded perfectly. No sooner had the soldiers caught a glimpse of him in rapid flight, than they set him down for the unquestionable object of their pursuit, and cut across the Downs at full speed to intercept them. Shuffling and ungainly as he was in all his movements, the idiot possessed great strength of limb, and a proportionate speed, which deceived others from the awkward manner in which it was exerted. It is said that the lapwing, to decoy plunderers from its nest, will run along the ground with a drooping wing, as if it were wounded and unable to rise, until it has lured its pursuers to a safe distance, when it will soar into the air, and leave them in the lurch. Some such instinctive cunning suggested a similar device to Matthew, for seeing that he could outstrip his competitors at pleasure, he occasionally faltered as if exhausted, suffered them to approach him near enough to excite

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their hopes, and then, with a low chuckle of triumph at the success of his manœuvre, bounded, and shuffled, and scrambled away till they were again distanced. In this manner did he hold them in chase till he reached Abbot's-Point-gap, a spot where the lofty cliff had fallen in, and to such as were not very solicitous about their necks, presented a means of clambering, or rolling down to the shore. It had been a favourite resort of the idiot's, so that by leaping and sliding down in a sitting posture, he soon found himself upon the beach, and would have pursued his flight, but that he was tempted to conceal himself behind one of the crags, to see how his pursuers would accomplish the descent. By assisting one another, and enduring a few falls and bruises, followed by the customary quantum of execrations from the sufferers and laughter from their companions, the whole party reached the shore, and seeing no boat in sight, they took it for granted that the chase had doubled the Point. In this direction they accordingly hurried forward, and the idiot, chuckling at his having outwitted them, re-

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mained quiet for three or four hours, and then walked very leisurely back to the farm.

Reuben, in the mean while, attired in Matthew's homely habiliments, quitted the farm after a profusion of thanks to his noble-hearted friends, interrupted by their vows and prayers for his safety, and walked rapidly forwards in an opposite direction from the sea, so as to remove himself as far as possible from the party that were pursuing the idiot. Once more he found himself a homeless and houseless wanderer, proscribed by the Government, hunted by military and other bloodhounds for the price that had been set upon his life, and with as little apparent prospect of effecting his escape from the enemies that beset him, as when he first fled from the field of Sedgemoor. Weary of these derogatory disguises, and of a furtive existence so repugnant to every feeling of his nature, he felt tempted, in very desperation, to bring his fate to immediate issue, by hastening to the shore, and attempting to bargain with some of the fishermen for his conveyance to Holland. If he succeeded, it were well;

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if they ventured to arrest him, he determined to defend himself to the death: in either alternative he would be relieved from a humiliation and misery that began to grow intolerable. These desponding thoughts, however, were not of long continuance. The recollection of his lost parents, and the ineradicable conviction that it was his destiny as well as duty to live for the elucidation of their fate, reconciled him to the endurance of his lot; while the deep devotion of his whole heart to the beautiful, the sage, the magnanimous Helen, and the sweet hope, however vague and undefined, that at some distant period he might be permitted to approach her as a suitor, determined him to endure with fortitude any present probation that afforded him a chance of such a glorious reward in future. Painful too as it might be to creep about in disguise like a common malefactor, there was something cheering in the remembrance of the generous heroism evinced by all those whose protection had been hitherto extended to him, for it ennobled and endeared his fellow-creatures to his heart, and assured him

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that others would equally justify any confidence he might hereafter have occasion to place in their good offices.

While he was thus walking rapidly forwards, too much absorbed in his own thoughts to notice surrounding objects, his attention was caught by a harsh and angry voice loudly ejaculating—"Oh, the blood-thirsty negers! the curse of Cromwell upon the whole gang of ye in this world, and brimstone and blue blazes in the next!"—and upon looking up he recognized the figure of his old acquaintance, Norry Molloy, tramping towards him with an infuriated countenance and wrathful gestures. So completely was she occupied with her execrations and her passion, that she passed him without even casting an eye upon him, or appearing conscious of his presence; but as Reuben thought he might depend upon her, and felt that she was the most likely person in the world to extricate him from his difficulties, he turned round to follow her, saying as he overtook her —"Surely this must be my friend Norry Molloy."—"Hooly powers!" she exclaimed, as she

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gazed upon him, with a countenance suddenly altered to an expression of compassionate delight; "Sure I can swear to the sweet voice of the young master, for it's himself that it is, though he's dressed like such a poor sowl. Musha! rest and pace, and the blessing of St. Patrick upon your head! and have I found ye at last?"—Reuben was about to bespeak her assistance in getting him on board some vessel, when she continued in an earnest whisper—"Hould your whisht! hould your whisht!" at the same time pointing to a cottage whose owner she stated had recently given up one of the fugitives to justice, "one of the gentlemen who wud have payed gowlden guineas for a sail in Mick's cutter:" a circumstance which had excited her fiery indignation, either from the treachery of the act itself, or from its having deprived her of a good customer, or perhaps from a mixture of both feelings. When they had gained a safe distance from the abode of such a suspicious personage, Reuben was again about to explain the predicament in which he stood, but she interrupted him by exclaiming—

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"Avoch, poor boy! don't I know it all? didn't I carry over to Holland in our own laping cutter, your friend Fludyer; he with the goggle eyes that are always rowling, and the tongue that is never quite; and soon as I knew ye were in the scrimmage at Sedgemoor, and down in the black list, haven't I been bating the bushes, and tramping the baich, arly and late, fair and foul, sunshine and moonshine, and trudged round and round Goldingham Place till I knew the park-paling by heart, just to get a glimmer of ye, honey dear, that I might get ye out of the grip, and aboard the Greyhound, and so just pop ye down in Holland beside your friend with the goggle eyes?"

"Truly, my good friend," said Reuben, "I am infinitely obliged by your kind intentions, and I wish to Heaven we had sooner encountered. But how came you to venture back, when you are yourself as liable to apprehension as I am?"

"Ah, botheration entirely! is it an owld woman, like me, they'd be looking after, when they're all hunting for rebels that they can sell

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for gowld? By my sowl! I forgot all about the 'ciseman, the Devil may choke him, when I larnt ye were in trouble, and ye the same that did me the good turn when I was put up yonder."

Reuben was proceeding to utter his acknowledgments, and to pay her some warm compliments upon her generous and grateful feelings in his favour, when lifting up her voice and both hands at once, she interrupted him by calling out, "Ah now, will ye jist be asy wid your blarney? Hubbaboo! haven't I tould ye that once ye done me a sarvice I 'd never rest in pace till I cried quits wid ye: and had ye done me an injury wouldn't I ha' gone through fire and water to have my revenge, plase God? So ye see it's just nothing at all at all but a dibt I 'm paying ye. And now spake the word, honey dear, and tell me what was your schame for getting over the water to Hans Mundungus and your friend wi' the goggle eyes?"

Reuben declared that he had not yet organised any plan for that purpose.

"O wirra! wirra! my darlint," resumed

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Norry, "I thought you had more gumption in ye! But never fear; I'll find the manes, and you'll only have to folly where I lade; so don't be concarned a bit about it, for we can't go agin our nature. I'll taich and ye shall larn, and another time ye'll know how to 'scape out of a scrimmage or a little matter of trason, as well as your friend that jist made nothing at all of it, or as owld Norry Molloy that's been all her life at the work, and yet here we are, as bowld as brass, good luck to us!" She then proceeded to state that Mick's cutter, after having already made several successful trips with passengers, was again off the coast, and that they had expected to have a "raal gintleman" to carry over that very night, though from the information she had just learnt at the cottage, she believed the "thief of the world, had given him up to the soldiers. Reuben, however, she suggested, might supply his place, when they would have a "raal gintleman" after all; in which case he would only have to betake himself to Beer-head, "clane away on t'other side of Lyme," and prowl about the Dolphin

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ale-house, where she would meet him at midnight, give him the signal of a whistle, and accompany him to the boat. To this arrangement he very willingly assented, taking the most minute directions how to find the public-house in question; when Norry, observing it would be safer to separate for the present, left him with many hearty valedictions of "God increase ye, my jewel, and the blessed Virgin protect ye, and the hooly St. Patrick befriend ye in right arnest!"

Keeping his course along the Downs, where he was little likely to encounter wayfarers of any sort. Reuben set off at a brisk pace for the place of rendezvous, making a considerable detour inland as he approached Lyme, and obtaining in his journey a distant view of Goldingham Place, upon which he gazed for some minutes with a feeling of deep regret that he had ever quitted its peaceful walls; although the recollection of Helen Trevanian, and of the services she had so nobly rendered him, tended in some degree to reconcile him to his fate, and almost enamoured him of the misfortunes which had

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procured him so transcendant a benefactress. Of his uncle, indeed, he could not think without many compunctious visitings, though it was a consolation to him to reflect that he had scrupulously refrained from compromising him, and that he would now in all probability be speedily enabled to relieve him from all apprehension by communicating to him his safe arrival upon the Continent. Cheered with these pleasant anticipations he briskly pursued his way, and by making a few occasional inquiries of the shepherds, arrived without molestation in the vicinity of Beer Head, and discovered the Dolphin public-house, into which he entered, relying upon his disguise, procured some refreshment, quitted it again, and laid himself down beneath a hedge to await the coming of the night, and the appearance of his friend Norry Molloy. Long before midnight, and for two hours after it, did he tramp backwards and forwards in front of the Dolphin, but without hearing the appointed signal of the whistle, or even the foot-fall of a single passenger, and his spirits and strength were both beginning to fail him when

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he perceived glimmering lights at some distance, which upon their nearer approach he discovered to proceed from torches, borne by two men walking a little in advance of five or six others, who were followed by a cart and horse.

Deeming that such a party could not be making their way through the darkness and across that lone country for any honest purpose, and sure, at all events, that they could bode no good to himself, he peered about through the gloom for some place of temporary concealment, that might at once enable him to watch their proceedings, and remain within ear-shot of the Irishwoman's signal, should she still keep her appointment. A few yards above the public-house, at the point of the angle where the road branched off in two different directions, stood a low pollard oak, with a thick bushy top, into which he climbed, considering it well adapted for his double object. Here he watched with an intense interest the approach of the torchbearers and their companions, who, if they were engaged in any lawless business, appeared to confide in their numbers, and to be

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unsolicitous of concealment, for they occasionally laughed and talked aloud, though he had not hitherto been able to catch a word of their conversation. His curiosity in this respect was soon destined to be gratified, for to his equal surprize and consternation, they halted immediately under the tree in which he was perched, drew up the cart, took from it a large iron cauldron, which they suspended by a chain from a triangle they had brought with them for the purpose, and proceeded to light a fire beneath it. So far they might have been taken for a gang of gipsies preparing their mess, especially when one of them was seen to empty a bag of salt into the huge boiler; but their appearance in other respects utterly forbade this interpretation. There were no females in the party, two of the men wore a species of uniform, and seemed, from the orders they issued, to possess authority over the others, while the whole were much too well dressed to allow the supposition of their being gipsies. Reuben's conjectures as to their office and intentions, soon yielded to the absorbing interest of their

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conversation, from which he gathered that the famous fast-sailing cutter, the Greyhound, which had carried off so many of the rebels, had been chased that morning by one of the King's armed pinnaces, and driven from the coast; while the old Irishwoman that belonged to it, had been seen prowling about Colyton bottom, and had very narrowly escaped the officers who had pursued her into Barncomb Wood. Norry Molloy's non-appearance was thus fully explained; all his sanguine hopes of her assistance were suddenly and painfully dispersed at the very moment that they seemed to be realized; and, in addition to his own overwhelming disappointment, he had the misery of thinking that her generous exertions in his behalf might endanger her life, without having contributed in the smallest degree to the security of his own. Even these considerations, deeply inportant as they were, did not long engross his mind, for his faculties were now all engaged in contemplating the alarming proceedings of the party beneath him. A dark, thick, and offensive vapour, steaming up from

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the hissing and sparkling cauldron, sometimes enveloped him so completely as to preclude his seeing them, but, upon its dispersing, he could perceive a block, with a hatchet and a saw, deposited at the foot of the tree, while a ferocious-looking man, having bared both his arms, was sharpening upon a stone a long and gleaming knife. In the belief that some horrible atrocity was about to be perpetrated, although he could not even guess at its nature, Reuben drew his pistols from his bosom, grasped one of them in each hand, and resolved, if possible, to prevent it, even by the sacrifice of his own life. Bending over the mysterious figures with this intent, his weapons pointed at them, and only a few feet from their heads, he saw, with a mingled feeling of horror and surprise, a naked corpse taken from the cart and dragged to the root of the tree; its distorted features, which betokened a violent death, showing ten times more hideous and ghastly from the glare of the torches that were held over it, and contrasting the pallid and appalling ghastliness of death with the life-animated faces of the apparent assassins by



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whom the body was surrounded. They drew it up to the block, they hacked off its head with the axe, the knife was plunged into the body, a grisly gaping wound received the torch-light into its crimson depths, and, to Reuben's sickening apprehensions, no crew of cannibals preparing their unutterable banquet ever presented a more hideous and revolting spectacle. Its real nature now flashed suddenly and with a withering effect upon his mind, and if any thing could add to the horror of the scene, it was the conviction, the harrowing certainty, that the same savage butchery would be inflicted upon himself, should he fall into the hands of his enemies, or be discovered by the miscreants beneath him. The deceased, upon whom these cruel indignities were being inflicted, had been one of the rebels, a farmer of some note, whose head, after being boiled in pitch and salt to preserve it the longer, had been ordered to be nailed up against the oak tree in the public road which led down to his sequestered dwelling: while his quarters, previously subjected to a similar process, were to

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be distributed among the neighbouring villages. As the man had been much beloved by his numerous servants and labourers, the fear of their indignation had induced the hangman and his associates to execute this decree in the night-time, and had thus exposed Reuben to the misery of being a spectator of their incipient proceedings. Of the loathsome abominations that followed, he saw nothing, for he sate with closed eyes, a swimming head, and a sickness of the heart, which at times rendered it extremely difficult for him to avoid falling out of the tree into the very midst of the mangled remains and the ensanguined quarterers beneath him. By shutting up all his senses, however, as well as he could, against the revolting scene, he was enabled to retain his position until the whole harrowing process was completed, and the party, after having nailed up the head, had taken their departure; when he leapt from the tree and ran into an adjoining field, where he was still sufficiently near to the public-house to hear any signal that might be made by Norry Molloy. From the tidings he had heard, he



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had little or no hope of her appearance, and was therefore scarcely disappointed when the morning light reminded him that his lurking about the place might excite suspicion, while there could be no chance of the friendly Irishwoman attempting to get him on board in the daytime. On the following night he determined to resume his watch, and in the meanwhile to remain in the neighbourhood, and endeavour to procure rest and refreshment, of which he began sensibly to feel the want.

Sickened, disappointed, and wearied almost to exhaustion, he pursued his way along one of the branching roads, until he came to a solitary cottage, in front of which a woman was occupied in hanging some linen upon the hedge that surrounded a small garden. Reuben had just been complacently reflecting that all the efforts hitherto made in his behalf had proceeded from women, who had not only preserved his secret with inviolable fidelity, but had voluntarily risked their lives in his cause; and the gratitude and admiration which he felt for the whole sex seemed to sublimise into a species of devo-

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tion his love for Helen, whom he considered its brightest and noblest paragon. Every woman became exalted in his eyes; he believed that all were equally entitled to his confidence, whatever might be their station, and in the gentle eye and prepossessing countenance of the one now before him, he thought he could trace a full confirmation of his opinion. Its natural and simple benignity was indeed shaded by an expression of deep sorrow, but believing that the afflicted are ever most disposed to sympathize with their partners in misfortune, this circumstance only corroborated his first impression, and determined him to seek the shelter of her cottage. As a means of precaution, however, he first inquired whether her husband were at home, to which she replied, while the tears started into her eyes, that she was now a poor lone woman, without either husband or son. This was an additional security to Reuben, who walked in and requested to be furnished with a breakfast or refreshments of any sort, for which he declared his ability to pay handsomely, notwithstanding the unpromising poverty of his apparel.

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Such homely viands as she had were cheerfully placed before him, and when he had concluded his meal he intreated permission to lie down for a few hours, earnestly exhorting her, before he betook himself to the pallet in an inner room, to call him instantly should any passengers or visitants present themselves at the cottage. With these injunctions she readily promised to comply, when Reuben, having first latched the door, which was the only fastening it afforded, and placed his pistols upon a chair beside him, stretched himself upon his humble bed, and overcome with his previous vigils and exertions soon fell asleep.

If he was at length destined to be deceived in his confidence of woman's inflexible fidelity, it was only where the greater virtue supplanted the lesser; where maternal love, that paramount law of nature, extinguished for the moment all subordinate feelings of compassion, and rendered a mother capable of treachery to a stranger, when she could thereby purchase life for her own flesh and blood. This peasant woman's only son had joined Monmouth's army, had

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been taken prisoner after the battle of Sedgemoor, and incarcerated at Lyme; and had been for some time lying in the gaol, under sentence of death. By a refinement of vengeful policy it had been promulgated, that if any of the common people would bring in a rebel of the better class, who had been proclaimed by name, they might demand the liberation of any individual of their humble rank, even although he should be under a capital conviction. This poor woman, devotedly attached to her son, and hopeless of saving his life by any other means, had procured a list of the nominated traitors, over which she had often pored till she was blinded by her tears, wishing that fate might throw in her way some such means of saving her boy, although despairing of a good fortune which presented itself to her rather as a delightful dream, than as a probable occurrence. Now, however, she most unexpectedly saw a chance of its realization. In the manner of Reuben's visit were many circumstances to awaken suspicions, which, when once aroused, were ea-

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gerly fostered by her maternal feelings. His command of money, his looks, his demeanour, were all equally at variance with his poor attire; while his desire of sleeping in the daytime indicated that he was a fugitive and a night wanderer. No sooner, therefore, had he retired to the little sleeping-room, than she applied her eye to a crevice in the door, and never withdrew her looks till she perceived him to be sound asleep, when she stole into the apartment breathless and on tiptoe, and, hastening to remove his pistols in the first instance, discovered the words "Reuben Apsley" engraved upon the butt. She was almost sure that she had seen the name in the printed list: she drew it from her pocket—her head, locks, and hands, all trembled together so violently, as she compared the paper with the weapons, that for some moments she was unable to read; but at length her eyes flared with a wild joy as she ascertained the identity of the names. Again she crept on tiptoe out of the apartment, fastened the door on the outside, ran with the speed of a maniac to a station at

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a small distance, where there was a relief-guard of the soldiers employed in patrolling the beach, related her discovery, and returned with six armed men to the cottage. Awakened by the noise they made in entering his room, Reuben started from the bed to seize his weapons, and defend himself to extremity; but he was knocked backwards upon the pallet, and, after a short but desperate struggle against the whole party, they succeeded in forcing manacles upon his wrists, and in a few minutes more he was marching under their escort towards Lyme. Stalking a-head of them with long strides, as if she wished them to accelerate their pace, the peasant woman tossed her arms triumphantly into the air, repeatedly exclaiming in a wild and incoherent manner, "My Willy! my own Willy! don't forget you're to give me up my Willy! Remember, I'm to have my Willy!" After which she applied a variety of endearing epithets to her boy, and seemed to be half delirious in the prospect of recovering him from the jaws of death.

Upon their arrival at the prison, she ran



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eagerly up to the gaoler, shouted out the name of the prisoner she brought with her, reminding him that he was one of the proclaimed rebels, and impatiently demanded to have her son given up to her upon the instant!

"Here 's a coil about your boy! as if nobody had ever had a rogue of a son in limbo before," said the gaoler, who was conversing with a friend, and liked not this clamorous interruption. "What was the fellow's name?"

"William Yelverton!" replied the woman.

"Of what place?"

"Of Holms-end-lane."

"Ay; we ha'n't many under the letter Y," said the gaoler, turning to a large book, in which, from the great number of the prisoners, he had been obliged to enter them alphabetically: "let 's see—W, X, Y—ay, here he is! Yelverton, William, of Holms-end-lane, aged 18: is that him?"

"Bless him! that 's his age: and that 's my dear Willy, sure enough!"

"Why then he was hanged yesterday afternoon!"

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"What!" screamed the woman, in a wild agony.

"He was hanged yesterday afternoon!" repeated the gaoler, turning round the book, pointing with his fore-finger to the entry, and resuming his conversation with his friend.

With eyes almost starting from her head the wretched woman gazed horror-stricken upon the record of her son's doom, clasped her hands sharply together, uttered a piercing shriek, that made the whole building re-echo, and fell backwards on the floor.

What became of her, Reuben had no means of ascertaining, for he was marched forwards into the penetralia of the prison, and with a heavy heart heard the great gates closed behind him.

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## CHAPTER VI.

"Though of all these pleasures past,
Nothing now remains at last,
But remembrance, poor relief!
That more makes than mends my grief,
She 's my minds companion still,
Maugre Envy's evil will.
She doth tell me where to borrow
Comfort in the midst of sorrow,
Makes the desolatest place
To her presence be a grace,
And the blackest discontents,
To be pleasing ornaments."

GEORGE WITHER.

"*Pardi, mon cher!*" said Sir Harcourt Slingsby, taking a feather from the Squire's cuff, and tapping off the dust from his sleeve; "Fashion is my polestar, my Jacob's staff, my loadstone, and my damask rose; but as to

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my being a venatorial man of the mode, as to my worrying myself that I may torment a hare, as to my hunting with you to-morrow, may my periwig be singed with lightning, if I can listen to the proposition. No man who wears a noble or polite garniture should compromise it in such a dangerous pursuit; for your poor Puss, however innocent she may show, is a vengeful and malignant animal, who invariably, as I have observed, betakes herself to the sloppiest and most miry roads, where her pursuers must inevitably commit suicide upon their own wigs, cravats, and Flanders lace."

"Whoop! Baronet, if you heard my spotted bitch Venus give tongue after a retrieve, sink me! if you would ever lie snoring a-bed when the huntsman wound the reveil. As to wigs I generally hunt in a close bob, out of which I have previously knocked the powder by dusting it with my hunting whip."

"Pardon me, Squire, but I am the next of kin to the last man that was hanged for sheep-stealing, if your powder does not deserve to be horsewhipped every hour of its inodorous

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existence. Honour me with a commission to *Marechal*, and I will send you from London some of his tuberose, amber, or frangipane, with a vase of his pomatum, the best in Europe, made from lamb's-caul and maydew. Favour me with your opinion of this snuff, and prythee admire the box; it is the first day it has seen the light; and may I be six weeks behind the fashion, if it have not one of the prettiest joints in Christendom."

"Hey, whoop, yoicks!" shouted the Squire, not noticing this invitation; "yonder goes red-nosed Ralph with my roan hunter. There 's a horse for you, Sir Harcourt; one of my own breeding, too. Sink me! there 's nobody understands horseflesh better than red-nosed Ralph. Poor fellow! he 's still lame from his accident at the old Cavalier's funeral. Yes, I tell ye who knew something about a horse:—Dick, the gypsy. He stole one of mine, a black gelding, coal black, fifteen hands high, rising seven, with a star, snip, and one white foot. And what do you think he left me in exchange? A lean pyed mare, not ten hands high, rising two and

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twenty, narrow-jawed, sour-headed, saddle-backed, goose-rumped, hip-shot, foundered, wither-wrung, and moon-blind. Haugh! haugh! haugh! Clever fellow, that Dick. Lookye, Sir Harcourt; you shall ride my Roan if you'll go a-hunting with us to-morrow."

"What! to have a heavy-heeled groom stumping into my bedroom at four o'clock, with a lantern in his hand; to be startled with the cracked voices of huntsmen, the clamour of bugle-horns, the baying of hounds, and the yelping of curs; to mount a vicious animal and ride him full tilt against a five-barred gate; to toss up for lives, in short, with a fox or a hare, or, what is worse, to splash my *Chedreux*,—pardon me, Squire, but may I wear dirty sky-coloured ribbons for my sword-knot, if I hold it quite fair to Sir Harcourt Slingsby to pit him against Monsieur Reynard. You are looking at my gloves, I see; I flatter myself the fringe is piquant, the cut urbane, the embroidery debonair, the perfume prepossessing, the *tout-ensemble* jaunty and ingratiating. I pique myself upon being always *bien ganté*."

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Although the gloves in question were indisputably modelled after an exquisite and inimitable fashion, they had occupied no share in the Squire's thoughts. He had caught a glimpse of his sister Emily: his own embarrassments, and the destitute plight in which his ruin would leave her, flashed upon his mind; and his eye fell, half unconsciously, upon the Baronet's hand, as he wished to himself that he could see the glove withdrawn, and the fingers occupied in placing the wedding-ring upon one of Emily's. All his manœuvres and machinations for accomplishing this most desirable event had been hitherto unavailing. She had been thrown as much as possible into his society; all her little stock of accomplishments had been carefully brought forward. But although Sir Harcourt had cordially expressed his general admiration of her character, and more particularly of her spirited and uncompromising defence of her friend Helen Trevanian, he had never deviated from the invariable courtesy that marked his conduct towards all females, into any of those warmer and more pointed devoirs, which

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might indicate a personal attachment to the individual. Her brother had lost no opportunity of extolling her merits, sometimes with a coarseness that hardly atoned for its sincerity, and always after a fashion more characteristic of himself than complimentary to the object of his encomiums. Seizing every occasion to stimulate his friend's sluggish perceptions, as to Emily's superior qualifications for a wife, he pursued his favourite project in their present colloquy by an interrogatory that would seem, at the first hearing, to have little immediate connexion with the object he had in view.—"I say, Sir Harcourt, do you remember my flea-bitten grey mare, Juno, that died of the glanders, and Bob Fenwick's laughing at me for snivelling when I buried her? Sink me! there was a beauty!—there was a mare! I shall never see such another. Poor Juno! she would follow me about the grounds like a dog: only to call out her name, and she would winny, run up, and rub her head against my shoulder. I never see Emy without thinking of her."

"Ineffably flattering to Miss Hartfield!"

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said Sir Harcourt; "but may I be caught with my periwig *en papillotes* if I can immediately trace the affinity between them."

"Whoop! but I can though; and sink me, if I know which I loved the best, nor which of them had the best temper and the kindest heart. No likeness between them! 'Sblood! you might have taken them for twins. Juno was rather hot, and a trifle ungovernable in the mouth;—so is Emy. Emy doesn't show much blood in the pastern and fetlock joint, not thorough-bred;—no more was Juno: but both clean made, and as well set up on their haunches as any girl or mare in Dorsetshire. Juno carried a good forehand;—so does Emy. Juno had a prime constitution, a rare feeder; and Emy used to be as bouncing and as hearty a lass as Juno, though she has got a little out of condition, and not quite so fresh as she used to be. Ah! Sir Harcourt! there 's the girl that will make a rare wife whenever she marries."

"Freckle me, Squire, if I doubt it, for she seems a most intelligent, amiable, and warm-hearted girl, though she has a modicum of

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*mauvaise honte* and a trifle of *gaucherie* to get rid of before she can be pronounced thoroughly modish and *degagé* in her manner. What are the young rurals about that they come not forward to claim so buxom a prize? Marriage is a troublesome ceremony, which I myself have not the courage to go through; I leave it to my tradespeople; indeed it seems just adapted for the lower orders. Making love—a most monotonous and fulsome process;—going to church—solemn and lachrymose as a funeral:—young women fainting, old ones whimpering—the bride in hysterics, and the groom looking as if he were going to be hanged instead of married; then the noise and hubbub, bells ringing, friends drinking your health, and wishing you joy, servants with great nosegays and white favours—all deplorably ungenteel. May I carry sweet snuff if I can understand how decent people bring themselves to practise such vulgarity!"

"Whoop! Baronet, the world must be carried on."

"So must sedan-chairs, but I have no

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ambition to be one of the chairmen. By the by, Squire, I have the prettiest French sedan sent me over by De Grammont, lined with Philamott velvet, which relieves my blonde peruque *à merveille;* a small mirror let into the lining on either side, and another in front; a pocket for my fleur d'orange and pomanders, a second for my snuff box; drap de Berri at top to keep out the rain; a fringed loop to tie up my sword; silver serpents for handles to the doors; and mouldings, arms, and tassels of the same metal:—a pretty toy enough to carry one to dinner at Lockett's or Chatolin's; and when I first published it in Bow Street and the Piazzas, I am the descendant of a dustman if my four footmen had not enough to do to keep off the mobile."

In this species of fashionable chit-chat the Baronet, running on with a careless though always an elegant fluency, would occasionally utter sentiments which corresponded rather with the prevalent opinions of the mode, than with the real feelings of his own heart. Of this nature had been his observations upon

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marriage, which, however, he had purposely advanced to check the importunity of his host, who somewhat too obviously betrayed his wishes with respect to Emily. Never was there a more complete illustration of the adage, that an injudicious friend is worse than an enemy; for, in spite of her *mauvaise honte* and *gaucherie*, when she was quiescent, and the undue vehemence of her feelings when they were aroused, Sir Harcourt had a respect for Emily's character, though he revolted from the notion of being talked and tutored into a *penchant*, by the coarse, clumsy, and palpable contrivances of her brother. To one who had been long conversant with artificial manners, with the brazen confidence, affected suavity, licentious latitude, or pert vivacity of the Court females, most of whom, whatever might be their different disguises, practised the same vices in private, there was something inexpressibly attractive in Emily's comparative *naïveté*. Her blushing bashfulness was an evidence of her innocence; her angry earnestness, however it might violate the decorum of polished life, at

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least attested the blunt honesty of her character; and both, independently of their intrinsic recommendations, possessed in his eyes the paramount charm of novelty. Though he really despised the fashionable world, of which he was the acknowledged leader, he had a latent horror, however, of its ridicule; and the fear of its being said that he who might have chosen among all the titled belles of Whitehall, had suffered himself to be cajoled, by a bumpkin of a country Squire, into a marriage with his raw red-cheeked sister, haunted him with redoubled force when his clownish host blurted out any of these broad hints, and determined him not to compromise himself in word, look, or action.

"Whoop! sink me! Sir Harcourt," said the Squire, vexed and disappointed at his diatribe against matrimony, which he considered to be a complete damper to his hopes; "I suppose you will hold it vulgar next to play shuffle-board, though you 've promised me a game this many a morning. What say you? Shall I stake my gold watch against your's?—Mine is a Tompion, your's Aspenwold's; and both about

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the same value, I suppose. Mine, to be sure, belonged to my poor old father, but I can tell by its ticking that it feels melancholy at being left behind, when all the trees and half the acres have walked off from the Rookery. —Whoop! who wants fathers or godfathers?

'He that wears a brave soul, and dares handsomely do,
Is a herald to himself, and a godfather too.'

Hey! Yoicks! Tantivy! 'Sblood! I 'm in rare spirits. Haugh! haugh! haugh!"

Sir Harcourt having signified his readiness to join him in any sport that might afford him diversion, they proceeded to the hall, which they had no sooner entered than the Squire inquired, with a distasteful look, the meaning of the perfumed smoke that pervaded the place.

"May my periwig olfact of tobacco, if this be not a graceful innovation of Miss Hartfield's," said Sir Harcourt. "On account of the number of dogs that quarter themselves in the hall, I was yesterday, in crossing it, obliged to refer to my pomander, and your sister then promised me that she would correct the evil, for which

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attention I hold myself her debtor. I must send you, however, some of Silvani's pastilles, scented with musk and calembuc."

"Buzz! Sir Harcourt; give me the good old times, when our halls always smelt of meat and March beer, and the floor was well strewed with dog's dung and marrow-bones. The best perfumes then came from the buttery hatch and the great cellar, when half-a-dozen black jacks stood at the door, and a rich smell of damp saw-dust and spilt wine rose steaming up from below. Come on, Baronet; I ought to be lucky in the old hall; for there's a horse-shoe nailed to the threshold, and a clove of garlick stuck over the door. So here goes for your gold Aspenwold."

A huge pair of antlers were nailed to the wall above the shuffle-board, and the Squire gave a long and animated account of his father's exploits in following up the stag to which they had belonged, until he had leapt over the cliff at Beer-head, and had been dashed to pieces. To this narrative the Baronet gave much more of his attention than to the game, so that his

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antagonist marched off in triumph with the golden prize, dangling it by the chain, and venting a horse laugh at his success; chuckling less, however, at the value of what he had won, than at the hope that his guest, who had hitherto declined high play, might gradually be lured on to more important stakes. It had now become absolutely necessary that somebody should be heavily pigeoned, for an uninterrupted run of ill-luck in his desperate gambling with others had completed the derangement of his finances. Already was his estate mortgaged to its full value; from his inability to pay the interest, some of the parties were threatening to foreclose, while his recklessness and prodigality increasing as his affairs became more deeply involved, he never dreamt of any restriction upon his extravagance, except from an actual want of the means to gratify it. "What was the use of any savings now?" he asked himself in a sort of apologetical soliloquy. They might have been available once, but the time was gone by: nothing could redeem him but deep play, and a run of good luck, for it



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must turn some time or other. In the mean while a short life and a merry one was his motto. If he must go to the Devil, he would go like a gentleman and a jolly Squire as he was; he would blow up, with his hounds, hunters, and racers, round about him; the claret and the ale-butts should flow freely while he yet kept the key of the cellar door, and the old Rookery should ring to the echo of his bumper toasts, the shouts of jollification, and the rattle of the dice-box, before the cursed mortgagees came with their infernal lawyers and parchments to unearth him like a hunted fox, to rout him out, and perhaps bring the ancient seat of his ancestors to the hammer, and knock it down to some such rich city huncks as old Goldingham.

"Whoop! sink me! if that be-wigged and be-ribboned coxcomb, Sir Harcourt, would but nibble at the bait," continued the Squire, as he walked up and down the dining-room; "and either play dice-doublets for hundreds, or strike up to Emy; or if she herself were not such a

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blushing, open-hearted simpleton, surely she might have managed to coax, wheedle, bamboozle, or brow-beat him into some sort of an avowal, of which advantage might be taken; but the deuce take the noodle, she has no more cunning than a blind buzzard. I would bully him myself into the match, but curse the fellow, fop and Jack-a-dandy as he is, I believe he would fight a duel with as much indifference as he would take a pinch of snuff. Confusion! there 's Collison duns me publicly, and Tyrrel threatens an execution. All will be blown if I can't raise a thousand, and who the deuce to apply to, hang me if I know, for Sir Harcourt must not discover my poverty, or he will never go deep at the doublets. There 's Sir Ambrose, indeed, but he has latterly been smirking and smickering at Emy; and if he could bring himself to decide upon any thing, we might perhaps hook him, after we have dangled the bait a little longer before t' other. Sir Ambrose never plays—the cash must be had, so sink me! if I don't ask him to lend



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it. Hey! whoop! yoicks! tantivy! who's afraid?

'There were three men came out of the West,
To make saltpetre strong,
To turn it into gunpowder,
For to charge the King's cannon.'

'Sblood! nobody can say I don't keep it up to the last—game to the backbone—rare spirits. Haugh! haugh!"

Sir Ambrose, at this juncture, although engaged to return to the Rookery, had gone to spend a few days with Sir Carroll Crockatt, an opportunity of which the Squire gladly availed himself to make a written application, and spare himself the pain of a personal petition. He accordingly sate down and penned the following letter:—

Rookery, Tuesday Morning.

"My dear Sir Ambrose,

"Circumstances which I need not state, as they are merely of a temporary nature, having occasioned me to be uncommonly hard run for cash, sink me! if I shall not feel particularly

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obliged by your favouring me with a loan of a thousand for a short time. I make no apology, my dear fellow, for this application, because, from your numerous professions of friendship, I am sure you would wish me to give you a preference.

"Yours, my dear Sir Ambrose,

"MARMADUKE HARTFIELD."

The Squire was too old a campaigner in pecuniary skirmishes to trust this epistle to any uncertain conveyance, well knowing that many wise men of the world have an established mode of suffering such an unwelcome application to miscarry, and so pass it over sub-silentio; although, after a lapse of some weeks, they will most pathetically admit that it has just come to hand—a delay the more truly to be deplored, because the spare money which would have been most cheerfully at the disposal of the applicant a little while before, was now unfortunately invested, every farthing of it, in a mortgage. To prevent any evasions of this sort, he entrusted the missive to his worthy

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coadjutor Chinnery, instructing him to call and deliver it into Sir Ambrose's own hand. This was punctually executed, and on the next day he received the following answer, written in a stiff, legible, official-looking hand, with every point and comma carefully in its place; the whole in an envelope of thick paper with gilt edges, tied round with a narrow silk, secured at both ends by the emblazoned arms of the seal, and addressed, Marmaduke Hartfield, Esq. &c. &c. &c. The Rookery. (*Private.*)

"My dear Sir,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of yesterday's date, setting forth that circumstances which you need not state, as they were merely of a temporary nature, having occasioned you to be uncommonly hard run for cash, you would be particularly obliged by my favouring you with a loan of a thousand —(*meaning pounds, I presume.*)

"With regard to this proposition, it is not only particularly painful to me, but decidedly distressing to be compelled to confess, that I cannot

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consistently sanction your solicitation. If my pecuniary powers be copious and considerable, the claims upon them are not only very various, but of much magnitude; while my connections in the Commons, and the maturing of my measures with the Ministry, are continually calling upon me for different disbursements. How you can be embarrassed with so productive a property, I can neither comprehend nor conjecture; but as you state your troubles to be temporary, they will, of course, soon terminate: and my real regard for you makes me anxious not to add another testimony to the moral maxim, that he who lends upon loan only forfeits his friend, at the same time that he is casting away his cash.

"On Friday next I propose myself the pleasure of returning to your hospitable house, when I hope to find that there is little in my letter to call for any division between us. You will shortly see that you have not formed any erroneous estimate of my faithful friendship, as I shall be then happy to give you the advantage of my advice, and by the contribution of my

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counsel, do all in my power towards the facilitation of your finance.

"In the meantime, and always, (with my particular devoirs to Miss Hartfield,) I beg you to accept the assurance of the real regard with which I have the honour to be,

"My dear Sir,

"Your very devoted humble servant,

"And faithful friend,

"AMBROSE JESSOP."

"Whoop! Curse the pragmatical prig!" cried the Squire, tearing up the letter in a passion, and scattering the fragments in the air; "I was wrong to ask such a cold-blooded, pompous—'sblood! I should like to double-thong him with my hunting-whip." Emily, who had entered the room unperceived, now put her arm gently over his shoulder, and looking affectionately in his face, exclaimed, "My dear, dear Marmaduke! how comes it that you have latterly always something to vex and annoy you?"

"Yoicks! tantivy! tallyho!" shouted her brother, placing one hand on the back of the

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chair, and leaping repeatedly over the seat, "does that look as if I were vexed or annoyed? I 'm ready to come over a stick for the King with any fellow in Dorsetshire. I have a cast of seasoned hawks, five couple of spaniels, a pack of staunch hounds, a rare stud both of hunters and racers, a main of game-cocks, capital greyhounds for coursing, old wine in my cellar, a bale of dice in my sleeve, a chink of guineas in my pocket, and the prettiest girl for a sister within ten miles of Lyme; why then should I be faint-hearted? Hurra! I have some proper topers coming to dine with me to-day—

'Come lay by your cares, and hang up your sorrow;
Drink on—he 's a sot that e'er thinks of to-morrow.'

Is that the tune of the old song? Vexed!—Whoop! that's capital—haugh! haugh, haugh!"

"Ah, Marmaduke! Marmaduke! these may be high spirits, but they are not happy ones. What would I not give to see you as uniformly cheerful and gay as you once used to be! Don't you remember how you would dance and sing with me, and how you rattled and laughed when



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we rode out together, and how you used to go whistling about the grounds, and play with your dogs, and fly your hawks, and pat and caress your favourite horses, and be as happy as the day was long? But now you are continually out of humour; you are often agitated; you clench your fists and talk angrily to yourself as you are walking; you frequently pass me without speaking or even appearing to see me; you spurn your dogs away with your foot when they fawn upon you, and take no pleasure in your horses; or if you do ride, you bring them back foaming and spur-galled, as you never used to do before."

"Buzz! Emy," said the Squire, turning peevishly away, "you are a silly girl, and know nothing about the matter."

"My dearest brother," resumed Emily, shaking her head, and again gazing fondly upon his face, "I cannot be mistaken in that countenance; it is quite different from what it was formerly: it is always either care-worn and haggard, or flushed and angry. Sometimes, indeed, there is a dreadful gaiety about it; but

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I am sure it does not come from your heart, for the very sight of it makes mine ache. No, Marmaduke, you are never happy before dinner; and after it I hear loud laughter, and clamorous toasts, and the clatter of dice-boxes; but I never see you in the drawing-room as I used to do."

"'Sblood, girl! I didn't know you were the mistress of the house, and that I was to give you an account of every bottle decanted in the dining-room."

"Pardon me—pardon me, brother, if I have offended you!" eagerly exclaimed Emily; at the same time taking up his hand and gently pressing it: "I did not mean to be your monitress; but, indeed—indeed, my dear Marmaduke, you do not look upon me; you do not speak to me so kindly as was once your wont." Her voice faltered as she uttered these last words, and she turned aside her head to conceal her emotion.

"Whoop, Emy! I know it—I know it! I see what you mean; you need not remind me of it. I have taken your patrimony—your

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marriage-portion, which you were fool enough to give up to me; and I have squandered it like a scoundrel!"

"Cruel, ungenerous Marmaduke!" cried Emily, casting at him a look of indignant reproach, while the tears gushed from her eyes. "Have I deserved this? have I ever even turned my thoughts in that direction? Was I not delighted to comply with your request; and would I not have given up to you my heart's blood if I—— O Marmaduke! how could you?"—As the momentary wrath by which she had been supported, and which had imparted a degree of anger to her voice, yielded to a burst of returning tenderness and sorrow, she hid her face in her hands, and sobbed violently. A pang of remorse and unavailing regret had shot through her brother's bosom, while he recognized the truth of the portraits she had drawn of him in his former days, and in his present; and the tears and agitation of the only being upon earth that he loved, so softened his rugged nature that he felt a thrill of fond compunction as he drew her gently

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towards him, and impressed a kiss upon her cheek.

"Whoop, Emy! my dear Emy! nonsense, nonsense!" he exclaimed in a milder tone, "do not mind me, if ever I speak harshly to you; I do not mean it. Sink me! I should be a wretch indeed, if I did; but I *am* a wretch—an unfortunate, miserable, ruined wretch!" And his head drooped, while his eyes were fixed despairingly upon the floor.

"Oh no, no, no!" sobbed Emily, suddenly turning round her streaming face, and repeatedly kissing the hand which she had again grasped; "do not say so, my dear Marmaduke! or you will break my heart outright. What can I do to comfort you?"

"If I am a cup too low, Emy!" said the Squire, endeavouring to rally his spirits, "sink me! if it is not upon your account, not my own. For myself I care not a rush what happens to me—no, not *that*, (snapping his fingers with a bitter smile,) but when I think what is to become of you! That I have wasted your portion—that you may, perhaps—buzz!

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d—n it, Emy! you are making me as great a milksop as yourself." He drew the back of his hand over his eyes, and was preparing to depart when his sister retained him, exclaiming—

"Nay now, dearest Marmaduke, do not—do not be uneasy on my account! Indeed, indeed, I can bear any thing, every thing, except to see you miserable. What can I do to make you happy?"

"Happy?" ejaculated the Squire, with a sneer of sad derision,—"Whoop! make me drunk!"

"Oh do not talk so, my dear, dear Marmaduke! nor wear that angry smile upon your face. See, I am quite composed again. You used to like me to play to you when you sang—

'Come lay by your cares and hang up your sorrow.'"

"Ay, Emy! because I had neither care nor sorrow to lay by: people don't sing when they have. I have them now *here*," he continued, striking his fist upon his heart; "*here*, biting, and teazing, and gnawing; and do you think you can unkennel them with an old song? Buzz,

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girl! you may as well attempt to whistle a hare out of her form, or a fox out of his earth!"

"Nay! but there's magic in music, they say, and I will positively try its influence. Can you not join me in—

'A boat, a boat, haste to the ferry?'

or, Sir Robert Howard's favourite song—

'O Charon, gentle Charon!'

or, shall I sing you Davenant's famous mad song—

'My lodging is on the cold ground,'

in which, as you once told me, Moll Davies first attracted the late King's attention!"

"No, no, Emy; I may soon have no better lodging myself. No mad songs, if you love me."

"Well, then, it shall be your favourite hunting song out of the play: you used to be always asking me for it."—Taking his arm and leading him to an old pair of virginals, she placed a chair for him, into which he threw himself half unconsciously; and then seating herself before the instrument, she sang in an untutored but not unmusical voice the following song:—

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Hey ho! hey ho!
The merry horn does blow.
'Tis broad day---come away,
Twivee! twivee! twivee, hey!
Do not stay.
Then have at the hare!
Let old puss beware.
Twivee! twivee! twivee, ho!
The merry horn does blow---
Come away!

The song to which he had so often listened, bringing back to his mind a long train of recollections associated with his earlier and less profligate days, soothèd and pleased him so long as he remained in the society of his sister; but she had no sooner left him than the sense of his present misery seemed to be embittered by the remembrance of the tranquillity and cheerfulness that he had once enjoyed, and summoning up all his false spirits to conceal his real depression, he shouted, and laughed, and whistled as he went to prepare for the reception of the Bacchanalian friends whom he had invited to dine with him. By their assistance and the aid of deep potations—for there was to be no gambling that night—he not only succeeded in effec-

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tually discarding those temporary impressions of remorse which had assailed him in his conversation with Emily, but attained the sole species of happiness of which he had declared himself susceptible, being carried to bed by his servants, at an advanced hour of the morning, in a state of senseless intoxication.

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## CHAPTER VII.

"The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invisible,
Cutting a smaller hair than may be seen,
Above the sense of sense, so sensible
Seemeth their conference; their conceit hath wings
Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, swifter things."
SHAKSPEARE.

REUBEN's sudden disappearance from Harpsden Hall had excited various emotions among its different inmates. To Lady Trevanian it was a satisfaction that he had not carried off his livery, though she regretted the loss of so tall and comely a servant; and in promulgating among the neighbours that the post of butler was vacant, she took special care to add that no ugly or undersized person need apply for it, and that to any candidate of a proper height

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and presence, she was willing to give wages proportionate to his personal recommendations.—"In this respect," said her Ladyship, "I am disposed to imitate Nature, and behave handsomely where she has done the same; for as I drink little or no wine myself, the least I can expect from a butler who ministers no gratifications to my palate, is that he should please my eye. I doubt whether Ganymede or Hebe were made cup-bearers to the gods for their skill in pouring out nectar, so much as for their good looks; and it may be even questioned, whether they were asked for any other character than that which they carried in their faces."

Helen was relieved from a most painful state of anxiety by the departure of so perilous an inmate; for though she had borne up against all the dangers that menaced her, with great fortitude and self-possession, and indeed had never known any other fear on her own account than that of not doing her duty, she still deeply dreaded the consequences that might attach to others—to Reuben, to Adeline, and perhaps to her mother, from any discovery and public ex-

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posure in the house. On this subject there was now nothing further to apprehend, and as she believed that their *protegé* would not have slipped away so suddenly without having devised some feasible mode of escape, she rejoiced in the prospect of his avoiding the cruel fate that threatened him, and impatiently longed for the day when the certainty of this fact would enable her proudly to refute the injurious insinuations of Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, and confirm her claim to the generous confidence of Emily Hartfield.

As to Adeline, she was so equally divided between grief for the loss of her dear darling Arcadius, and her confident anticipation of his making his escape, and returning to claim her hand as soon as the expected amnesty should leave him at liberty to do so, that she hardly knew what feeling to prefer; in which uncertainty she was occasionally to be seen sitting in a desponding attitude, with her eyes fixed upon the sky, as if she thought she were thinking; while at other times she would burst into noisy gaiety, and swim fantastically about the room, prac-

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tising attitudes, or coquetting with her own figure in a large mirror, while she sang snatches of French songs. Her favourite resort, however, was the summer-house where she had first met her lover, and her principal recreation the perusal of amorous romances, of which she had just been fortunate enough to procure one that she had never before perused. "May I die, Helen," she exclaimed one morning to her sister, "if it be not the sweetest work, the most *spirituel* and *delicieux*, the most full of *verve*, considering it is of English production, that I have yet encountered,"—and she put into her hand a ponderous tome, entitled, "The Princess Cloria, or the Royal Romance, by a Person of Honour," inviting her to peruse it. "Nay, then," she continued, upon Helen's declining the offer, "you must positively let me read to you the first sentence—only one paragraph, because it just describes the manner in which I should like to meet my own Arcadius, when we next encounter." Without waiting permission, she opened the volume, and in an affected, theatrical manner read as follows:—"Beautiful

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Aurora had newly dressed the pearly morning with a ruby coronet to entertain her lover, who began already to mount his chariot for the day's triumph, when unfortunate Cassianus, in the great forest between the mountain Timolius and the City of Sardis, rose from his grassy bed under the large canopy of a well-spread oak, where the night past he underwent an inconvenient lodging for want of better shelter, and being seated upon the root of that tree, that, however, had favourably contributed its best assistance towards his accommodation, with intention, according to his custom, to pay an early offering to his sorrow, whilst his page saddled his horse that procured more bountiful entertainment than his master, since the time of the year had provided plentiful provision for his appetite; of a sudden his ear was saluted with a well-tuned cry of deep-mouthed hounds that seemed to charm the air with a delightful harmony, which consequently gave the Prince some interruption to his resolutions; but long he had not contemplated the pleasingness of the music, with a certain strife inwardly notwithstanding whether his

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complaints or attentiveness should receive more friendly welcome in his discontented bosom, before he might see a young gentleman in a hasty hand-gallop ——."

"Hold, hold!" interposed Helen; "now that we have come to the young gentleman, who I suppose is the representative of your Arcadius, prythee spare me any more—you promised to limit yourself to one sentence."

"*Je n'en disconviens pas, ma sœur*, and I have not yet nearly completed the first."

"It is the last, however, that I shall hear, for I have no patience for such interminable periods, and so I must beg leave to fly in the same manner that the stranger was seen to approach—in a hasty hand-gallop."

"*Eh, l'impertinente! voilà une obstination inouie*," said Adeline, betaking herself to her thick volume, and soon becoming deeply interested in the loves of Cloria and Narcissus, Orontes and Andromeda, and half-a-dozen inferior *amourettes*, all of which, however, finally gave way to her anxiety to know what had become of her dear Arcadius, and what was to

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be the result of their mutual attachment, for she never doubted his reciprocating the passion that burnt so fervently in her own bosom. Divination with cards she had already tried, without having been able to elicit any very distinct augury from those equivocal oracles. Her dreams had been equally shadowy and inconclusive; and in this dark incertitude she had been long weighing the practicability of consulting an old wizard residing in the neighbourhood, whose vaticinations were held to be infallible. This ancient seer, the identical person that had been consulted by the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, tenanted a miserable hovel not far from Harpsden Hall, and was universally deemed guilty of witchcraft, upon the rather whimsical ground, that he was old and wretched, and had been tried for that offence forty years before and acquitted. By leaving the house early in the morning she might reach his abode, and return before the hour of breakfast; but it was necessary to conceal her expedition from Helen, whose ridicule she dreaded, and to find a companion. Grace Wardrop, who was now upon

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her knees half the night long, and at occasional intervals during the day, praying that the young soldier of the Lord might be delivered from the hands of his enemies, would have been the fittest person to attend her in this *adventure;* for, with Adeline, every excursion received that name. But Grace was no favourite of hers: she was too much devoted to Helen not to communicate their proceedings to her; and besides, she doubted her compliance with her request, and anticipated a pious dehortation from consulting false prophets and lying oracles. She accordingly applied to one of the inferior maids, an ignorant country girl, who, by the promise of an old hood and scarf, was easily induced to accompany her, and the following morning was fixed for their excursion.

Though the winter had now prematurely set in, it proved, luckily for the parties, to be one of those bright, clear, calm mornings which are so rare at this season. The sun was just rising as they set off, the sky was perfectly cloudless, and there was not a breath of wind to disturb a thin powdery snow, which had fallen in the



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night, and having become congelated by the coldness of the ground, crumbled crisply beneath their feet, while it formed a thin white line upon the smallest projection and ledge of every building, that made it stand out in the glassy atmosphere, sharply relieved against the blue sky. On either side of their footpath the grass was crystallized with frozen dew, which hung upon every fibre and articulation like fairy network, the whole sparkling in the sloping rays of the sun, as if the ground had been spangled with innumerable minute diamonds. Even the hedges assumed a strange and picturesque appearance, their summits twinkling brightly in the ray, and the lower portion being thrown into comparative shade, though still of a dazzling whiteness; while the weeds and thistles upon every bank seemed to have acquired an unusual beauty, now that the gracefulness and elegance of their forms became distinctly recognizable, from the light snow with which they were so delicately encrusted.

Adeline was no very fervent admirer of the beauties of nature, but she could not help being

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forcibly struck as they approached a small grove, consisting of birch and ash trees, surrounding a clump of majestic oaks. Every twig and tendril of the former being mantled over with hoar frost, gave to each branch the appearance of a feather, and to the whole tree that of a stately plume, supported by a single silvery stem; an image to which the tall, dark trunks of the oaks, and the more rugged and angular configuration of their huge boughs, afforded a marked though not unpleasing contrast. Here and there a blackbird or a thrush sprang from the spray as they advanced, scattering down the frozen crust, which tinkled upon the dry leaves below: and in one part of their progress they started a hare, which rushed suddenly among the underwood, shaking a shower of spangles upon its back, and causing such a fright in the maid, that she nearly jumped into a ditch on the opposite side, exclaiming,—"Drat thee, nasty tuad! thee 'st brought my very heart into my mouth; why castn't get out o' way quietly, and not vrighten a body o' that 'n foolish sort? —Now, lawk love ye, miss!" she continued,



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" doant'ee have a shabby vortun told 'ee, but gi 'un half-a-crown at once, as Miss Chaloner did, and he promised she a husband in vour months; and zo she gie her maid as went wi' her a layloc gownd, almost as good as new, and a vine zatting scarf."

This broad hint was not thrown away upon Adeline, who promised a further remuneration to her companion if she had reason to be satisfied with the oracle, which they had now nearly reached. He who was supposed to have obtained a mastery over fate and fortune, had not apparently availed himself of his privileges either in his own person or his circumstances; for in the wizard they found a decrepit and hideous old man, living in a wretched hovel that exhibited every indication of the most squalid poverty. His, indeed, was the worst species of want—the want of what he had; for when he had been driven out of the society of men as suspected of witchcraft, he had betaken himself to the fellowship of gold, and by encouraging the notion of his prophetical powers, and hoarding up every shilling (even to the de-

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nial of common necessaries), which his deluded clients brought to him, he had contrived to surround himself with buried and hidden guineas. This was to him the sweetest of all solaces, the greatest of all triumphs, for he had thus revenged himself upon his fellow-creatures by fooling and cheating them, and upon fortune by accumulating wealth in the very midst of the poverty wherein she had originally steeped him. Thwart and disnatured as he was, the wretch was shrewd, almost to sagacity; and having first pocketed the half-crown, with eyes sparkling and fingers trembling with delight, he soon managed by a few leading questions, assisted by the maid's inquiries and observations, to give Adeline a tolerably accurate description of Reuben's person, to promise her a husband in a very short space of time, hinting that it might possibly be a runaway match, and to dismiss her full of delightful anticipations, and ejaculating with uplifted eyes and hands—"*Mais c'est étonnant!—c'est merveilleux!—Eh! quel prodige d'homme!*"

Just as they were emerging upon their

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return, from the little grove of birch, ash, and oak trees, Adeline stopped short on observing several horses, with housings and holsters, attended by grooms, stationed at the gate of a lane through which they had to pass. At such an early hour, and in so sequestered a spot, this was a phenomenon beyond her immediate comprehension. Quickly reverting, however, to the witch's prophecy, she began to imagine that the runaway match to which he had alluded, was about to be immediately realized, and her heart fluttered as she reflected that nobody would carry her off except her own dear darling Arcadius. He might have watched and followed her from Harpsden Hall—he might have seen her pass through the gate—he might be there awaiting her return, intending to marry her in all haste—to whisk her over to the Continent, and to reside with her in some romantic chateau, until he should be enabled to return to England and present her as his bride. While this fantastic vision had been rapidly flitting athwart her mind, she had placed herself and the maid behind a large tree, from

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which position she presently saw two men open the gate and advance along the footpath. Unfortunately, neither of them was her lover, a point upon which the broad light of a sunshiny day did not allow the possibility of a mistake. The path which they were pursuing would lead them up close to the tree where she was then standing, and as she began to doubt the intentions of these strange men, and had no wish to be discovered in so lonely a place at that unusual hour, she desired the maid to follow her behind a cow-shed, having a pile of faggots at its extremity, which promised to afford them an effectual hiding-place. Hither they accordingly retreated, unobserved by the approaching pedestrians, though a variety of chinks and fissures in the rude shed behind which they stood enabled them to obtain a perfect view of the two figures, who halted immediately opposite their place of concealment, and began a conversation of which only detached portions fell upon the eager ear of Adeline.

"Where can they be?" were the first words that she caught, and she observed that the

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speaker looked up and down the field as if in search of some one.

"They cannot be far off," replied his companion. "I have traced both their footsteps in the snow for some distance from the gate."

At these words Adeline's doubts were converted into terror. "Good Heavens!" she exclaimed in a low whisper, "to what strange fate am I reserved? They are indisputably in search of me: what horrid design have they formed?"

The last speaker now turning suddenly round, revealed to her the mustachoed features of an officer, who, after having gazed upon her at church on the previous Sunday in a very pointed and passionate manner, had picked up her prayer-book in the church-yard, and presented it to her with a high-flown compliment, a circumstance which to her prurient fancy seemed to develope the whole mystery of the adventure. He was violently in love with her, and had formed this plot for carrying her off, having pursued her from her own house for this especial purpose. "Wretched Adeline!" she whis-

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pered to herself, "I shall be torn by force from the arms of the man I love, and hurried off by this odious stranger. It is vain to scream for help—there is not a soul within hearing. If he discover me I am utterly lost—my only hope is in concealment." At these words she crouched lower down, making a signal to her companion to do the same.

Still, however, she continued peeping through the clefts of the shed, and her apprehensions rose to an agony of fear when she saw the same party draw from a small bag a pair of pistols, of which he opened the locks and examined the pans, while he exclaimed in an Irish accent, "As pretty a pair of poppers as ever brought down a man. Never fear but they 'll do their work as clane as a whistle. If he has a mind to run off with her, by St. Patrick! he shall run with a bullet in his body! And, faith and troth! here he comes his own self just in the nick of time."

At this moment Adeline saw two other persons approaching, one of whom, to her disturbed and agitated perceptions, appeared



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to be her lover, who was ever uppermost in her thoughts, and the whole horrid truth seemed now to flash upon her mind at once. Reuben's intentions of carrying her off had been discovered—the officer before her was his rival—he had challenged him to fight a duel—and she would perhaps see her own dear darling Arcadius murdered before her eyes. It was clear—manifest—indisputable. She had been providentially guided to the spot for the purpose of saving his life, and, unable any longer to restrain her feelings, she rushed into the shed, fell upon her knees at the feet of the last speaker, and exclaimed in a terrified voice—"O spare him! spare him! he is the chosen one of my heart—it is his Adeline who sues for pity!"

The maid, at the same time, who knew nothing of what was passing in her mistress's mind, but had seen the pistols, took it for granted that the parties were robbers, and that she was begging for her life; in which belief she flopped suddenly down upon her knees,

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held up a leather purse in one hand, a brass thimble, a needle-case, and a horn comb, in the other, and blubbered out, "Lauk love ye! koind gentlevolk, do ye take all our money, but gi' us our lives, vor the love o' Heaven!"

At the conclusion of this terrified address, two more armed strangers entered the shed, neither of whom, as Adeline could now perceive, bore the smallest resemblance to her lover, and the whole company remained transfixed in a mutual and utter amazement, that deprived them for some seconds of all power of speech. It may be hardly necessary to state, that the parties met there by appointment, for the purpose of fighting a duel. A very short explanation sufficing to undeceive Adeline upon this point, she arose, covered with confusion, stammered out an indistinct apology, and was hurrying out of the shed, followed by the maid, who repocketed her purse with considerable satisfaction, when one of the strangers, planting himself in their way, exclaimed, "By St. Jago! such a pretty face as that should never pass

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without paying toll, and sure the least you can do, after taking us for robbers, or what not, is to give aich of us a kiss."

"Ah, now, my dear Gahagan, fie upon it," cried one of his companions; "a lady she is, every inch of her, I dare be sworn; and a frightened one too; and where's the Irishman would offer an incivility to such a one, let her be ever so handsome?"

"Bravo! bravo!" cried the others—the one who had opposed their progress joining in the exclamation, and standing aside, so that Adeline, seeing the coast clear, ran across the field with all the speed she could muster; in which, however, she was presently outstripped by the maid, who rushed past her with long strides, never thinking of her mistress, nor once looking behind her until she had scrambled over the gate into the lane. At this sight the party in the shed, who had been for some time bottling up their risibility, burst into a simultaneous roar of laughter, which echoed for some time in the ears of the fugitives. "Sure, now, my jewels!" said Gahagan, when some sort of order

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was restored, "wouldn't we be doing better, since we are in such prime order for a merry meal, to go back to the King's Head, order a tidy dinner, and be just blowing out one another's brains with bumper toasts, instead of hair triggers?"—A little mutual explanation between the antagonists, who had quarrelled about carrying off some real or pretended heiress in the neighbourhood, and the conciliatory interference of the other second, soon produced a general acquiescence in this most sensible proposition, and they were about to quit the ground, when one of the intended combatants, twiddling wistfully with his pistols, observed, "I'm content any how; not but what I must say, that, if we determined upon going on with the affair, we couldn't have a more beautiful morning."

"'Faith! that 's mighty true," said his adversary in a regretful tone; "troth! it is an elegant day for the sport, and such a likely smooth bit of turf, that perhaps it would be a pity——"

"Ah, now, no more of that," said Gahagan, interfering; "sure, if you shake hands now,

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and become as good friends as ever, won't you be certain of soon finding another opportunity of turning out together?"

Both parties being struck with the justice of this observation, they shook hands with the utmost cordiality, professed a stronger attachment than ever, and taking one another's arm as if nothing had happened, strolled back to the gate where they had left their horses, laughing with the most ungovernable mirth at the ludicrous mistake of Adeline, and the terrified supplications of her maid.

The terror of the two latter proved so far fortunate, that by accelerating their return, it enabled them to reach home sooner than they would otherwise have done, and thus to avoid any discovery of their excursion. Adeline dismissed her attendant with a reward and fresh injunctions to secresy, and immediately after breakfast began to make preparations for a grand public ball at Lyme, which was to be given that evening, and to which Lady Trevanian had promised to accompany her two daughters. This festival had been proposed by

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some of the Tory gentry, to celebrate the defeat of the rebels; the Whigs gave out that it was intended for a testimony of public joy at the departure of the blood-thirsty Jeffreys, and the cessation of the cruel executions; and both parties, making their own constructions as to the cause of the assembly, supported it with all their influence, intending it to afford a test of their respective strength. In the eyes of Lady Trevanian, a ball was sufficiently attractive in itself, without any extraneous inducements; but when she found that it was considered, at least by a certain set, as a condemnation of the recent severities, her bold and decided character instantly determined her to be present. Painful as was the prospect to Helen of encountering Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, without being able to exculpate herself from their disparaging surmises, she thought that her absence might only lead to additional misconstructions; while in the proud consciousness of her innocence she disdained to betray any fear of meeting them; and thus actuated, she prepared to accompany her mother and

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Adeline. As to the latter, she looked forward to the evening with delight, having no other anxiety than as to the dress she should wear, so as to present an appearance altogether *distingué*, *unique*, and *frappant*.

"Bless me, Adeline!" exclaimed Helen, on finding her in her bed-room surrounded with a whole wardrobe of different dresses, while all her stock of ornaments and jewellery was temptingly displayed about the apartment, "are you taking an inventory of your effects, preparatory to a general sale by auction? You look like a *marchande de fripperie*."

"May I die, Helen, if I can decide which of my dresses to wear to-night; for a ball in the odious country is such a rare occurrence that one would wish to do justice to it, and astonish the rustics by exhibiting *quelque chose d'eclatant*."

"If you would take my advice, Adeline———"

"*Tiens! ma sœur!*—I know your advice beforehand: you would recommend me hoods and modesty, masks and silence, or some other

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fashion equally antediluvian;—such as the *coiffure à la Castlemaine, chemisette à la Nell Gwyn, corsage à la belle Stewart, or echarpe brodée à la Grammont*, all of which are as completely exploded as the Persian dress for the men. No, it must positively be something *à la Sedley, ou bien à la Dorchester*, as I suppose we must now call her, since she has become a countess. Something that will display the *tournure* of my bust to advantage; what think you of this low point boddice, trimmed with silver?"

"Surely, Adeline, it is too indelicate."

"*Comment?*—Indelicate!—*il faut que je me fasse valoir.* My dear Helen, you talk like the daughter of a country Puritan; recollect, *je t'en prie*, that you have never been presented at Court, never danced at the balls, nor lounged and flirted in the galleries of Whitehall, as I have done. Prythee remember that I have seen the Richmond, the Portsmouth, the Cleveland, the Mazarine, the Gwyn, the Davies, the Sedley, and all the favourite belles and setters of the fashion, so that I ought to know some-

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thing of the matter. You 'll pardon me, my dear, but it is impossible, with your country education, that you should have any idea of the *grand monde* and the *haut ton*."

"I willingly confess my ignorance, Adeline; and you will therefore be the less surprized, when I tell you that I shall wear my brown demi-sultane, with a point gorget, and—"

"*Eh, par exemple! cela me fait dresser les cheveux à la tête.* Surely you mean to go *en grande parure, en habit de bal.* Positively, my dear, you ought to marry some thriving citizen, to sit in his back-shop in Fenchurch-street, to wear a gown two years behind the fashion, to go to church on Sunday, the foreman having you in one hand, and a huge bossed Bible in the other, while your husband in a broad hat brings up the rear, with his apprentices walking two and two; and by way of recreation, to stroll with a demure pace and a prim look into Moorfields, and envy the cheerfulness of the poor creatures in Bedlam." During the delivery of this speech, Adeline had walked mincingly up and down the room,

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mimicking, as well as she could, the starched look and gesture of a prim citizeness, and bursting into a fit of laughter when she had concluded her solemn imitation.

"I am obliged to you for providing me so appropriate a husband," said Helen, smiling; "but in spite of my vulgar notions, I have positively an objection to Fenchurch-street."

"*A' la bonne heure!* you may perhaps be more fortunate. Who shall say that you may not captivate some prudent young practitioner of the Inns of Court, who wears a faded wig, cordevant gloves, and soiled ribbons, and so parade out with him on a Sunday to Gray's Inn Walks, followed by the true Holborn equipage, a little foot-boy, pocket high, with a flat cap and a dirty nose."

"Must I then positively be condemned to live in London?" inquired Helen, not unamused with her sister's taunting rattle.

"*Quelle étourderie!*" continued Adeline; "I had quite forgotten that you prefer the horrid country; and may I die! Helen, but I think you would make an excellent wife to

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some honest yeoman, to bump behind him on a pillion, to dine on boiled mutton, garnished with a sprig of rosemary; the second course, furmity and custard, or whortle-berries and cream; the fruit, crab-apples, sweetings, and horse-plums; for confection, a pile of oozing honeycomb, a few caraways in a small saucer, three or four monstrous olives, a spoonful of capers, and a Suffolk cheese—with a bottle of Hungary Water, or mirabilis in the corner-cupboard, of which you would duly hand a gill glass to every visitant."

"Then prythee quarrel no more with my brown demi-sultane," said Helen, "since it must needs be gay enough for such a homely body as you have been describing."

"What think you of my wearing this robe of China, trimmed with point?" inquired Adeline, putting it loosely on, and viewing herself in different attitudes before a large mirror. "I remember that when I was coming with my mother from Whitehall, late after the King's *couchée*, some half-dozen beaux had thrown themselves down under the state in the outer-

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room, to jeer at the passers; and may I die! but they all vowed, as I stopped to chat with them, that it was *tout-à-fait distingué, bienseant, magnifique!*"

"Oh, then wear it by all means, for that which delights the courtiers must absolutely enchant the rustics."

"*Plaisanterie* apart, I verily believe I shall take your advice, if it be only for the novelty of the thing. Hand me my fillagree patch-box, Helen, and my japan glue-pot; I have a fancy to try the effect of my mouches. *Voyons! cela ne va pas mal.* Then I must wear my chicken-skin gloves, trimmed with Flanders' lace; my silk stockings, shot with silver; my painted fan, with pearl mountings; pearl buckles in my shoes, long pearl-headed pins for my hair, pearl bracelets and rings, and pearl pears in my ears."

"They will be as numerous as Milton's

'Dewdrops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower;'"

observed Helen.

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" *Tant mieux, ma chère:* it is quite the mode. The Sedley wears nothing else. When I last saw her playing cards with the King, in the Painted Gallery at Whitehall, she reminded me of what the poet said of her—

> ' Such ropes of pearl her arms encumber,
> She scarce can deal the cards at Ombre;
> So many rings each finger freight,
> They tremble with the mighty weight.'

*Voyons!* have I arranged all that I am to wear? *O Ciel! quel coup d'étourdi!* I have never settled about my head."

" Nay, if I am to wait till that is settled," said Helen, smiling, " I shall be too late for the ball; and so for the present I must leave you to your pearls and point lace."

Adeline was still deeply engaged in trying the effect of various costumes, by coquetting before a swing glass, when Helen rejoined her in her ball-dress, presenting a figure which combined all the attractions of unrivalled female loveliness, attired with tasteful simplicity and modest elegance, although it failed to meet the approbation of her sister. " *Tiens!*" she ex-

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claimed, in an accent of surprise; "*Voyez donc la petite Trembleuse! on diroit que tu sors d'une Pension.* Positively, Helen, you look like a Quakeress or a school-girl; I could almost have taken you for Grace, our Anabaptist maid. *Mais, je ne puis conçevoir!—c'est unique!*" and she walked round and round her with looks of contemptuous amazement.

"I am sorry that my dress does not please you," said Helen calmly; "but I believe it is quite decorous, and at all events it is now too late to alter it, for the carriage will shortly be at the door."

"*O Ciel!* then I must hurry on my things; it is really *choquant*, *barbare*, not to allow one more time." Her toilet was at length completed, and she had so liberally availed herself, in every respect, of the latitude of fashion and her own ridiculous taste, that she offered a complete contrast to her sister. In beauty, indeed, though its character and expression were totally dissimilar, she might be thought, at the first glance, almost to compete with Helen; but her fantastical though stylish-looking dress

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was too obviously adopted for display and effect; it was the costume of a theatrical dancer, well enough calculated to excite admiration, but by no means fitted to ensure respect for its wearer. In her deportment too, as if conscious at once of her beauty and her splendid trappings, she betrayed a more than usual share of swimming and simpering affectation—bridling up her head, nodding her tall plumes, diving, and ducking, and seeming to challenge all eyes, as she paraded along; a carriage rendered the more conspicuous by the unassuming and ladylike self-possession of her companion.

Lady Trevanian had abjured the errors of her youth, but she could not bring herself to abandon all claims to the possession of that beauty by which they had in great measure been produced. Since her first settling in the neighbourhood this was the first public opportunity afforded her for establishing her title to admiration, and she resolved to improve it to the utmost. Her dress was accordingly magnificent; she sparkled in all her diamonds;

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the lustre of her fine eyes was heightened by rouge, and her commanding figure, now swelling into embonpoint, assumed the full privilege of the prevailing mode for its display.

The ball-room was already crowded when they arrived, and they had not advanced far through the gay assemblage, ere Adeline encountered Captain Gahagan, one of the party concerned in the duel-scene of the morning, and the same who had accosted her so tenderly in the church-yard, when he picked up her prayer-book. He was now accoutred in a handsome full-dress dragoon uniform, and being a perfect stranger to *mauvaise honte*, he advanced towards her, addressed her as Miss Trevanian, and requested the honour of dancing with her; a solicitation to which the capricious coquette, who had fled from him with terror in the morning, but who was now won by his fine figure and finer regimentals, gave a simpering and confused assent. Lady Trevanian, conceiving him to be some London acquaintance whom she did not immediately recollect, resigned Adeline's arm to the proffered one of the Captain, and soon after



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seated herself with Helen upon an elevated bench on one side of the room.

"Provoking creature!" whispered Mrs. Chatsworth, as she caught a glimpse of her Ladyship from the extremity of the apartment, "how handsome she still looks, and what beautiful diamonds she has! I wonder," she continued in a louder tone, "that poor Lady Trevanian should venture here, considering the notoriety of her former life."

"Whoop! Mrs. Chatsworth," said the Squire, who had overheard the observation, "if all the bad ones were to stay at home, you and I know another that wouldn't be here."

"Very likely," replied the lady colouring slightly, and biting her lip, "I can only say I wonder at her assurance."

"Sink me! so do I. Haugh! haugh! haugh!" The Squire was about to follow up this attack by some coarse sarcasm, when his attention was drawn to an altercation on the subject of Sir Ambrose Jessop, who in his politic anxiety to ingratiate himself in all quarters, had inadvertently engaged himself to dance with Mrs.

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Chatsworth and Miss Crawley at the same time. Lady Crockatt had not the smallest regard for her young *protegée*, but as she hated her friend Mrs. Chatsworth, she asserted the claims of her rival with great warmth; Mrs. Chatsworth, who had designs of her own upon Sir Ambrose, would not absolve him from his engagement; the Squire, with a horse laugh, offered to bet a dozen of claret, that with all his expertness as a Trimmer, Sir Ambrose could not get out of the dilemma unless he danced with both ladies at once; and the embarrassed Baronet, like the supposititious ass between the two pottles of hay, stood with a most lugubrious and puzzled aspect, in vain appealing to the angry disputants to listen to his explanation. Three times had he exclaimed, "Little did I think, and less did I imagine," without being able to obtain a further hearing; though he was at last fortunate enough to pronounce in a momentary pause this solemn decision: "In such a distressing dilemma, I fear I shall be forced to follow my customary course, by quitting the house before the two parties decide upon a division."



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"Indeed, Sir Ambrose," said Mrs. Chatsworth, "I shall not let you off so easily." And so saying, she bade adieu to further argument, took his arm, and led off her unresisting prize in triumph to the other end of the room.

"Was there ever such a selfish, ill-bred creature!" cried Lady Crockatt; "she does it on purpose to shock my nerves, knowing that I am at death's door: ordered to drink decoction of Althæa every half-hour for my cough, and apply the Anodyne balsam three times a-day for my rheumatism.—Eugh! there's another twinge in the shoulder. I should have been much happier at home with Cynthia, (poor thing! it made my heart ach to hear her howl!) especially as Sir Carroll is gone to Honiton. I believe he sent me here on purpose to kill me; however, I am determined to recover if it's only to disappoint him."

"Whoop! that's what I call being kind and hearty on both sides," observed the Squire.

"Oh! as to kindness, and feeling, and sym-

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pathy in this world, I have long ceased to look for them. Nothing but selfishness—nothing but selfishness! Only observe now: all the benches and chairs are occupied by ladies, in what I may literally call rude health; and not a soul offers me a seat, though every body knows what a wretched invalid I am! Ah! there 's lame old Mrs. Archer, I see, has quitted her 's just to speak to her daughter; so I 'll whip into it before she can get back! It 's all nonsense to stand upon ceremony at public balls!"

A buzz from the upper end of the room now drew all eyes in that direction, where Sir Harcourt Slingsby, in a magnificent court-suit of velvet and brilliants, was seen to advance; his inimitable periwig waving and swinging forward its perfumed wings, as with gracefully sliding, diamond-buckled foot, he slowly won his way up the room, bowing, congeeing, smiling, and addressing some polite and pleasant speech, in his own whimsical phraseology, to every one that he knew. Hearts and fans

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fluttered at the same moment, when he halted amid the female groupes;

"Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,"

played around him; and a halo of sparkling eyes encircled him wherever he stood; many a fair one was made happy by a passing notice or well-turned compliment; and happier than all was the blushing and confused Emily, when he stopped opposite to her, made his devoirs with his accustomed courtesy, extended his arm, and led her out as his partner for the night.

Upon the first arrival of Lady Trevanian and her daughters, Emily had run eagerly up to welcome her friend Helen, and had seated herself by her side, where she remained until her brother had led her away, to be introduced to one of his friends in another part of the room. Observing that Helen was unprovided with a partner, and feeling particularly anxious that she should not be subjected even to the appearance of a slight, while the mysterious occurrence

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in the painting-room remained unexplained to Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, she whispered to Sir Harcourt that as she was herself not much accustomed to the corant, with which it was proposed to begin, she would be particularly obliged by his allowing her to sit down during that dance, and his engaging her friend Miss Trevanian as her substitute. Kindness of heart, that indispensable constituent in the character of a real fine gentleman, was possessed by Sir Harcourt in an eminent degree, and his own amiability leading him instantly to discover Emily's motive, increased his respect for her, while it disinclined him the more to part from her, even for a single dance. A nobleman of his acquaintance entering the ball-room at this moment, he introduced him to Helen as a partner, and Emily, now that her friend was in the same set with herself, acquitted herself so creditably in the corant, that the Squire at its conclusion bustled up to Sir Harcourt, exclaiming in a loud whisper, "Whoop! Baronet, Emy reminds me more and more of the grey mare.

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Poor Juno, though she showed so little blood in the pastern, could come over a five-barred gate as light as a greyhound; and though Emy's not thorough-bred in the fetlock, sink me! if she doesn't foot it as neatly, and go as true to the time as the best of them."

Helen's partner proved to be an intelligent and accomplished nobleman; Adeline's was exactly adapted to her taste, for he wore a brilliant uniform, and never spoke to her without a compliment, either upon her beauty or her dress; Emily was at the pinnacle of happiness; and all were enjoying the night's entertainment, except Lady Trevanian, who, unknown to her daughters, was enduring a series of mortifications such as she had never before experienced. In the little circle of wits, literati, and demireps, which she had formed around herself in London, she had been looked up to as the life, grace, and ornament of a limited but gay and animated coterie. In the country she was well aware that this sort of society was not to be found, nor did she expect a general reception among such visitants as the neighbourhood afforded; but seve-

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ral of undoubted respectability had either called or sent their cards; with some she was upon terms of as much intimacy as the lapse of time allowed; and the absence of others, who had neglected to notice her, she fondly attributed to accident or inadverture, rather than design. At the ball, however, she was painfully enabled to appreciate the real estimation in which she was held: several of those who from curiosity or the listlessness of a country life had been induced to visit her, were so far from feeling disposed to recognize the acquaintance in the face of the assembled neighbourhood, that when they had occasion to pass her, they made a point of looking up to admire the beauty of the chandelier that hung from the ceiling; or across the room at the military trophies with which the opposite wall was decorated, or in any direction except that where she was seated. Not a few, who were anxious to fortify their own doubtful reputations by the manifestation of an indignant prudery, gave their heads a scornful toss as they passed, or kept themselves aloof



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by a marked and pointed avoidance. Among the latter might be reckoned Mrs. Chatsworth, whose professions of friendship in private had been as warm as her public demeanour was now cold and insulting. Of the more virtuous and delicately-minded females, some avoided looking at her Ladyship at all, for fear of wounding her feelings; while others gazed upon her as they passed with a look of commiseration, which her proud spirit felt with more bitterness than if their eyes had been fraught with a thousand insults.

There she sate, in all the blaze of rank, beauty, and diamonds—alone, avoided, despised; but though she was stung to the heart's core by this public and cutting humiliation, she disdained to manifest her indignation by the smallest exterior betrayal. An air of perfect complacency sate upon her features as she surveyed the whole scene; she had the most gracious and winning smiles for those who spoke to her, a haughty and contemptuous sneer for such as gave themselves any airs of squeamishness, and an undaunted stare for all those who

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ventured to encounter the artillery of her eyes, which from her very rarely winking them (a process that softens and subdues the fiercest orbs) wore an expression of peculiar boldness and defiance.

The ball was now nearly concluded, and Helen and Emily, with their partners, were seated together in familiar and cheerful converse, when a friend of Sir Harcourt's observed that if the present entertainment was given to celebrate the cessation of the executions, he feared it would be premature, as another of the rebels had that morning been lodged in Lyme Gaol, who would probably be soon tried and hung up, since he had acted a rather conspicuous part in the Duke's army. Sir Harcourt inquired his name, and his friend replied that he had seen him as he was entering the prison, and recognized him as young Reuben Apsley, the nephew of his neighbour, Mr. Goldingham.

Helen, who had been listening in an agony of suspense to this statement, which came upon her quite by surprise, in vain endeavoured to struggle with her feelings. A deep suffusion

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suddenly flushed her face, neck, and brow, which was as rapidly succeeded by a deadly paleness; she felt an instant sickness at her heart, the scene swam before her eyes, a hollow murmur rung in her ears, she faltered out a few indistinct sounds, and sank back fainting in her chair. "It is the heat," exclaimed Emily, supporting her in her arms; "she complained of being fatigued—a little air and Hungary water will quickly bring her to herself." These remedies, which were promptly applied, proved in a short time efficacious, and she again opened her eyes, although still too bewildered and confused exactly to comprehend what had passed. In answer to the numerous inquirers who crowded confusedly about her to learn the cause of her illness, Emily assigned the same reason for it as before, and assisted Sir Harcourt Slingsby in supporting her to Lady Trevanian, who immediately accompanied her to the carriage, which was fortunately in waiting. The motion of the vehicle contributed to bring her to herself, and she had soon shaken off her momentary indisposition;

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but when her returning consciousness brought to her recollection that she had publicly exposed her weakness, for she knew nothing of the friendly interpretation which Emily had so readily put upon her illness; above all when she reflected that Mrs. Chatsworth and Lady Crockatt would not fail to draw a thousand injurious inferences from the circumstance, and perhaps publish them to all the world; such a deep sense of humiliation suddenly overwhelmed her, that the blood again rushed tumultuously to her face; she felt a momentary dizziness, as if about to suffer a relapse, and rode on in the most distressing though silent agony of mind. Adeline, who had not learnt the information respecting Reuben, by which her sister had been overcome, was too deeply occupied in recalling the fulsome compliments she had received from her mustachoed partner, to need any other companion than her own vain and giddy thoughts; and it was perhaps fortunate for Helen that her attention was soon withdrawn from the painful occurrence in the ball-room to the sudden and unprecedented anguish be-

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trayed by her mother. Lady Trevanian's nerves had received a shock from Helen's alarming illness, which had in some degree weakened her customary audacity, and when she reverted to the pointed indignities that she had experienced, when she reflected upon the injury which her unpopular character was likely to inflict upon the children whom she loved, all the errors of her past life seemed to rise up in judgment against her; her spirit was no longer kept in a state of tension by the support of her pride, her feelings suddenly broke through the barriers by which they had been forcibly restrained, she fell upon Helen's neck, burst into a hysterical passion of tears, and sobbed like a child until the carriage arrived at Harpsden Hall.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.—
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty."

RICHARD LOVELACE.

HELEN passed a sleepless night, a prey to various emotions, of which she herself did not exactly comprehend the source, though she felt them to be not less degrading than painful. That the self-possession which she had evinced under circumstances equally critical and trying, should desert her at the moment when she had most urgent need of its support, and expose her to the injurious comments of a crowded

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assembly, was humiliating to her pride, to that honest pride which aimed not only to be superior to misconduct, but even to the suspicion of it. From Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, who would probably connect her illness with the unexplained occurrence in the painting-room, she anticipated every thing that was sneering and contumelious, nor could she yet without compromising herself and family, undeceive them, and assert the purity of her own motives and conduct. The acute distress by which she had been so utterly overcome upon learning Reuben's arrest, she herself attributed solely to the surprise of the moment, to the deep interest which she would naturally take in the safety of a man with whose fate that of herself and sister had become so strangely implicated; one whom she herself had been the means of preserving from danger on a former occasion, and one, above all, whose death would make a total shipwreck of Adeline's happiness. These were considerations abundantly sufficient to explain and vindicate her emotion, though they might not remove her regret at the

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weakness which she had betrayed, nor reconcile her to its publicity. As to the supposition of any more tender and heartfelt attachment, as to the possibility of her loving the same man as Adeline, of her becoming the rival of her sister, such a notion had not even suggested itself to her bosom, and if it had, it would have been indignantly chased away as a desecration of the sanctuary into which it had intruded.

All thoughts, however, upon her own account, either as to the danger she might incur from a discovery of the part she had acted towards Reuben, or of the calumnious rumours by which her character might be assailed, speedily yielded to that generous consideration for the happiness and safety of others which formed the distinguishing trait of her mind. Adeline was at present in happy ignorance of her lover's fate, a situation in which she determined to leave her, (unless she should learn it from others,) until she should have tidings to communicate which might perhaps entirely counteract, or at least alleviate, the shock of the intelligence, by affording her a rational ground of

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hope, that he might escape the fangs of the law, although he was already within its clutches. Could she effect Reuben's deliverance, she would secure Adeline's present happiness, whatever might be the ultimate result of her attachment to him, and thus atchieve a double good to others, while she afforded to her own heart the sweetest and noblest solace of which it was susceptible. Difficult of accomplishment as such a project might appear, a hint had been accidentally afforded to her which held out a feasible prospect of its realization, and, forgetting all selfish or minor considerations, she set about the execution of her plan with an energy proportionate to the vital importance of its object.

It will be recollected that on the morning of the Lord Chief Justice's departure from Harpsden Hall, he had received a message from a gentleman who desired to speak with him on confidential business; when, as the drawing-rooms were occupied, he had been ushered into Helen's painting-room. At this moment she herself was in the closet, preparing the implements of her art, and had thus unintentionally

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become the auditress of a conversation, of which she could sufficiently gather the import from such detached portions as reached her ear. Of Jeffreys' share, indeed—for with all his blustering he could soften his voice upon occasion,—she had heard but little; but from the louder and more angry expostulations of the stranger, she learnt that he was the near relation of a Mr. Prideaux, a gentleman of Devonshire, who had been imprisoned for his share in Monmouth's rebellion, and whose life Jeffreys had consented to spare for a bribe of ten thousand pounds to himself. To this proposition, on account of the largeness of the sum, or the circumstances of the family, there had been some demur; but the present visitant came in all haste to inform Jeffreys before he left the county, that they had at length raised the money, and were ready to accede to his terms.

"You were all fools together to boggle at my first offer!" said the rapacious and inhuman trafficker in blood; "for I must now have fifteen thousand for the fellow's life!"

The stranger loudly inveighed against the

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cruelty and injustice of this extortion, until his Lordship stopped him by exclaiming—

"Remember, Sir, that every time you raise your voice, I shall raise my price!" When, knowing the character of the man with whom he had to deal, and fearing that he might enforce his threat, as he most assuredly would have done had any further objections been urged, he consented to give him the fifteen thousand pounds in a few days, and indignantly withdrew.

Prudently keeping to herself the secret of which she had so unexpectedly become the depositary, Helen's curiosity had subsequently induced her to make some inquiries as to the fate of the individual so expensively ransomed; when she learnt that he had been discharged from prison, to the surprise of all those who were unacquainted with the infamous venality of the Judge, and was again quietly residing upon his estate.

From this occurrence she deduced her hopes of Reuben's reprieve from the jaws of death. His life might be purchased in the same man-

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ner from Jeffreys; having occupied a less conspicuous station in society than Mr. Prideaux, he might, probably, be released for a much more moderate sum; his uncle was wealthy, and would scarcely hesitate at sacrificing a portion of his fortune for one whom he had adopted as his son; to him, therefore, she resolved to have immediate recourse; to reveal what she knew, and suggest the propriety of his hurrying to London, and tempting the cupidity of the Judge by a handsome offer for the life of his nephew. She felt that there was not a moment to be lost. If Reuben were once put upon his trial, the difficulties would, perhaps, be rendered insuperable; an account of his seizure had doubtless been already transmitted to London; the least delay might ruin them all, and extinguish every hope; and with these convictions upon her mind, the result of her deliberations through a long sleepless night, she arose at an early hour, ordered the carriage, and drove over to Goldingham Place. Not even to her mother would she communicate her intention; for she knew the times to be full of cruelty and peril;

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and, if she failed in her enterprize, she resolved that the sole responsibility of it should attach to herself.

She found Goldingham in deep affliction at the imprisonment of his nephew, which he had learnt soon after its occurrence, and not a little surprized at receiving so early a visit from an unaccompanied young lady; nor was this feeling diminished when he learnt the purport of her coming. Although he had devised various schemes for Reuben's escape, and had indeed just concluded an engagement with a Captain for procuring his conveyance to Holland, he had so utterly abandoned all expectation of saving him, from the moment he had learnt his committal to prison, that the prospect now opened to him by Helen's communication suddenly raised him from the very depths of despair to the pinnacle of hope. Her previous conduct had exalted her in his esteem, and her present intelligence, combined with the promptitude of her interference, and the forethought and sagacity of her suggestions as to the best manner of negociating with Jeffreys, raised his

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admiration to such a pitch of rapture, that he took her hand between both of his own, and shaking it long and cordially, exclaimed—"Madam, Madam, you are a paragon, a Phœnix;—I feel—I feel—may I perish if ever I felt so before in all my life. If my poor boy should be saved, and ever forget his generous benefactress, I 'll give him a Rose-alley salutation—I 'll cudgel, I'll half kill—Adod! I 'll disinherit the rascal. Hem!"

Helen declared with a slight blush, as she disengaged her hand, that common humanity would have led her to conduct herself in a similar manner towards any other individual; disclaimed any merit in the transaction, and expressed her hope that the pecuniary sacrifice necessary for his nephew's preservation would not be a heavy one. "Lookye, Madam," cried Goldingham, "whatever it may be, every farthing of it shall come out of his own fortune, provided it will hold out; for he has but a slender patrimony, I can assure you. A young, rash, self-willed, deaf, blind, wrong-headed Jackanapes, a gull, a widgeon, to rush into

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this madcap affair in spite of my advice to the contrary. He shall smart for it, he shall pay for it; ay, and through the nose Madam, too, through the nose. Hem!"

Helen advised that, as money was no consideration compared to life, a handsome sum should be offered in the first instance, lest the worthy Judge should either decline the negociation altogether, or demand some exorbitant amount, and advance upon it, if not immediately conceded, as he had done in the case of which she had overheard the particulars. Though Goldingham would scarcely have boggled at any bribe which could ensure Reuben's safety, he neither liked to hear money so slightingly mentioned, nor could he bear to have it thought that he was not more competent, than any one else in the world, to drive a good bargain. "Odsbuds! Madam," he exclaimed, "if you knew how people toil and turmoil to get a fortune, you would rather be inclined to think that life is no consideration compared to money. We must not spoil our own market; it's as well to begin low, for we can always rise in our

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price. Leave me to deal with him. Fox, shark, vulture as he is, he must be deeper than I take him for, if he can gain any undue advantage over Isaac Goldingham. Hem!"

Upon this subject Helen declared her incompetency to offer any opinion, but strenuously recommending him not to come away without a definitive understanding with his Lordship, she bade him adieu, expressed the most heartfelt wishes for the success of his mission, and set off on her return to Harpsden Hall. "How I do love a woman of business!" ejaculated Goldingham as the carriage drove away; "I have seen many brokers of twenty years' standing that have had less notion how to get out of a cross-grained affair than yonder girl. She goes through the world with her eyes and ears open, knows how to set about things, loses no time in shilly-shallying, but strikes the iron while it is hot. Make a capital wife for any one in want of such an article."

That he might not forfeit his own claim to dispatch while eulogizing the promptitude of another, he immediately ordered out the old



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carriage, directed four post-horses to be sent for, packed up his silken armour and his Protestant flail, for it was impossible to say what Popish plots might suddenly explode during his residence in the metropolis; added such travelling necessaries as he might require, replenished his waistcoat pocket with lumps of sugar, and in less than an hour from the time of Helen's quitting the door, was whirling along the road to London at a pace which threatened to dislocate some of the bones of his ancient vehicle. Of his success, now that he had ascertained the lives of the prisoners to be marketable commodities, he did not entertain a doubt. He had always considered money to be little less than omnipotent; that any man in his senses should refuse a good round sum for the life of a stranger, when he could get nothing by his death, seemed to him an absurdity too monstrous to be anticipated; and though he could not think without an occasional twinge, of drawing the hard-earned cash from his own pocket, to enrich such a scoundrel as Jeffreys, yet the preservation of his nephew reconciled

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him to every thing, and he rode forward in great complacency, liberally paying his drivers, ejaculating occasional "Hems!" and not unfrequently making application to the saccharine solace in his waistcoat pocket.

Arriving without any accident in London, he proceeded immediately to his Lordship's house, but did not find it so easy to gain access to him as he had conjectured, especially when he reflected that the purport of his visit was to put a handsome sum of money into his pocket. In reward of his sanguinary services in the West, Jeffreys had now been created Lord Chancellor, an appointment which of course greatly increased the number of his engagements, and had not in any degree tended to mitigate his swaggering arrogance. When, however, Isaac was at last admitted to a private audience, it chanced that the great man, now elevated to the summit of power and dignity, was in an unusually gracious and complacent mood, a frame of mind which did not imbue him with an atom of suavity, but merely converted his habitual hectoring manner into an



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insolent bantering raillery, which he mistook for a witty condescension. Although it was morning he had been plying his pipe with such diligence that the room in which he sat was clouded with smoke, from the midst of which his fierce and inflamed countenance emerged, like an angry and lurid sun out of a fog; a lamp was by his side, apparently for the purpose of reluming his pipe, although from the atmosphere of the apartment it did not seem to have been often extinguished: it was now in his mouth, and he was occupied in reading and turning over a large roll of papers. "Mr. Goldberry, or Mr. Goldbeater, I believe," he exclaimed as his visitor entered, "sit ye down, Sir; sit ye down;" and he returned his eyes to the paper.

"My name is Goldingham, my Lord," said Isaac, taking a chair.

"Ay, ay, I recollect it now," said his Lordship, after finishing the page he was reading; "I stuck to your gold, you see, which I dare say you consider the best part about you, eh, ah? Methinks I can guess at your errand,

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Mr. Goldberry; you need not open your brief, for I know the whole case. Lord! Lord! to see how the judgment of Heaven falls upon all these rebels and traitors! We have got your nephew I find; I forget his name; the young *boute-feu*, the juvenile advocate of sedition and rebellion; and I take it, Mr. Goldberry, that you will not have wit enough to prevent his swinging."

"I, my Lord; I do not pretend to be a man of wit."

"Nay, Sir, you do yourself injustice, for you are rich, I hear, passing rich; and to get more money than your neighbours is to outwit them—is it not, eh, ha? It 's many years since I read Sir John Suckling's "Session of the Poets," but I remember that Apollo gives the prize of wit to a rich alderman:—

'Apollo declared that the very best sign
Of good store of wit 's to have good store of coin,
And without a syllable more or less said,
He put the laurel on the Alderman's head.'

You see I have not been always among the law-books, eh?"

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Considering all this to be merely thrown out as a lure for a handsome offer, proportionate to his reputed fortune, Goldingham observed, "If your Lordship thinks that wealth is wit, I am very willing to part with some of mine to save my nephew's life; and I am ready to hold myself responsible for his future good conduct. I beseech you to remember, my Lord, that he is very young; he must have been misled by others, for naturally——"

"Oh, ay, naturally—I dare say he is a very simple, witless, harmless innocent. I don't deny his being a fool; but a goose, though it may have no sting, can hiss as well as a snake: we must silence the preachers of sedition, for a tongue is sometimes sharper than a sword, though your nephew, I am told, plied both weapons equally well. As to his future good conduct I will take no security but his own."

"And that he shall give, my Lord, to any amount."

"Twopence, Mr. Goldberry, twopence will suffice, for he shall not be called upon to enter into any other security than that of a hempen

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halter, and he must have a longer head than I suspect if he can then manage to forfeit his recognizance. Nay, Sir, nay, you need not appeal to me; I told you that he should swing if we caught him, and in these matters I seldom break my word. His life is not worth an old Harry groat."

"With submission, my Lord, it is worth much more to me, and I am willing to make it worth much more to His Majesty," said Goldingham, who knew that any bribe to Jeffreys was to be passed off as ransom-money to the King.

"Eh, ha! how to His Majesty?" inquired the Judge. Goldingham had come with the full intention of higgling and huckstering, and showing his skill in driving a good bargain, but the bare mention of his nephew's swinging had banished all these mercenary thoughts from his head; and deeming it better to mention a good round sum at once, so as to close the discussion, he replied—"Lookye, my Lord; I consider the young man's fortune to be about five thousand pounds, and I am willing, as his guardian,

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for he is not yet of age, to give every farthing of that sum for his life, hard as it may be that he should live as a beggar."

"We will spare him that hardship by letting him die as one. Lord! Lord! Mr. Goldberry, 'he that is born under a threepenny planet will never be worth a groat.' You remind me of the spendthrift that made up to an heiress, and offered, if she would marry him, to settle her whole fortune upon her. Thank ye, said the wench, but it is so settled already. Know you not, Sir, that the fortune of traitors is already forfeited to the King?"

"True, my Lord, true," said Goldingham, mortified at the palpable oversight of which he had been guilty; "but before trial and conviction I believe it may always be conveyed away; hem! And I would lodge that sum in your hands immediately."

Jeffreys had already very handsomely feathered his nest; his present lucrative office placed him above the temptation to any very flagrant corruption; perhaps it could not be any longer practised with safety; perhaps he

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was determined to punish Goldingham for the rebuff he had experienced from him at Lord Trevanian's. Whatever might be the motive, he had resolved not to spare Reuben Apsley; and thinking he might as well affect a tone of indignant surprise at the very idea of his corruptibility, he took the pipe from his mouth, and with one of his blustering looks, exclaimed:

"In my hands, Sir? What, do you take me for one of the Voltores and Carbaccios of the mobile? for a sordid Sheriff Bethel? Is the Lord High Chancellor of England a likely person, think you, to compound treason paramount? the *crimen læsæ majestatis*, to dip his hand in Judas's bag, or the Devil's budget, to betray the King, his master, by taking ransom-money from his rebellious subjects?"

"Such things have been done, my Lord!" said Goldingham, striking his cane upon the ground, and fixing his large suspecting eye upon the Chancellor.

"Have they so?" retorted the undaunted Jeffreys, staring fiercely in return: "have a care, Sir! have a care! *Dicere est agere!* To



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talk treason is to commit it. This is libellous matter: point me out such a rogue, and even if he be one of the ribs and rampires of the state, I will trounce him—scour him! serve him as I did the kidnapping Mayor of Bristol, whom I brought to the bar t' other day, in his scarlet robes and furs, and made him plead like a common criminal! Are you aware, Mr. Goldberry—you who dare to fling out these random charges against constituted authority, that you are yourself liable to punishment for attempting to bribe one of his Majesty's Judges?"

"I don't know what punishment can be inflicted upon him who offers a bribe, my Lord; but I do know what is deserved by the man who takes one—hem! But why need we term it a bribe? Call it an offering to the King, for prevailing upon him to exercise his noblest attribute—that of mercy!"

"There is no mercy for audacious rebels, and brutal beastly traitors! The Scotch prelates have prayed that Providence would give to his Majesty, whom God long preserve! the

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hearts of his subjects, and the heads of his enemies: and it is my business to see that the latter part of the wish be fulfilled, so far as depends upon me. Your nephew is a doomed man; if we spare him, we shall have murdered all the others. I shall give immediate orders for his trial; and I only regret that we have not his friend Fludyer in the same limbo, that they might both be hanged on one gallows, as high as Haman's!"

Unable to divest himself of the belief that every objection was finally to be conquered by money, and that all these menaces were only held out *in terrorem*, to extort a heavier sum from his pocket; Goldingham, who was quite prepared to make any sacrifice, at last exclaimed, "My Lord! my Lord! if you will only mention what you consider a fair equivalent for my poor boy's life, I will endeavour to meet your wishes!"

"My wishes, Sir! I have no wishes on the subject, except that he should be hanged without delay; and that shall be cared for presently. *Post est occasio calva:* we will seize

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time by the forelock. If he wants to busy his numskull about any more rebellions, he must first take it down from the lintel of your hall-door: for there shall his head most assuredly be nailed before many days have gone over it."

"So, please your Lordship, I am willing to make a heavy sacrifice—if even ten thousand——"

"Not a hundred thousand! Good Lord! Good Lord! do we sit behind the great seal that we may fly in the face of Magna Charta and sell Justice? Begone, Sir; you have had your answer, and I have no time to be pelted and pestered with your insulting offers. Quit the room, Sir; and hark ye, Mr. Goldberry, learn to keep your tongue within your teeth, or you may chance to wear a stone doublet yourself. Away, Sir, away! I will not hear a syllable more."

Resuming the perusal of his papers, he repeatedly and impatiently motioned with one arm to the door, as if eager to get rid of his visitant; and Goldingham, sturdy and intrepid

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as he usually was, felt so astounded at the total failure of his mission, so overcome at the prospect of Reuben's fate, which now seemed inevitable, that he walked out of the room, silent, bewildered, and sorrow-stricken. What farther could be attempted on behalf of his unfortunate nephew it was beyond his imagination to conceive. Where money, the most irresistible of all agents, had proved so completely unavailing, he despaired of all human aid; and with a heavy heart prepared to return into Dorsetshire, and convey to Reuben the doleful tidings that he would soon have to expiate his indiscretion by a public execution.

Little as he might be disposed to sympathize with the complaints and forebodings of the nation, at a time when his mind was too full of his own distress to allow much room for popular grievances, still he could not altogether shut his ears against the universal discontent; and every thing that he heard or saw added dismay to the grief by which he was already afflicted. Upon passing the Monument on Fish-street-hill, he had observed that the

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inscription attributing the firing of the City to the Papists, had been carefully obliterated; Monks began to appear at Whitehall in the habit of their respective orders; the King appointed none but Catholics to situations of trust and emolument; and he had more than doubled the standing army, which, at a time of profound peace, could have no other object than the dragooning of his subjects into the forcible adoption of his own faith, or the infliction upon them of the same military persecution which the Protestants of France were at that moment enduring from their Catholic monarch. Stimulated by these corroborating appearances, all his terror of Popish plots revived with tenfold force. Every night that passed over without an explosion or a massacre, only convinced him the more that the next was reserved for those inevitable horrors, so that it was some relief to his mind to escape from London, although he was the bearer of such heart-rending tidings into Dorsetshire. From the moment of his arrival in the capital he had worn his impenetrable silken shirt, and carried his Protestant flail under his

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coat, defences which he scrupulously retained upon his journey, sitting bolt upright in his panoply, to his prodigious personal discomfort, and suffering an acute anguish of mind, not only from his individual distress on his nephew's account, but from his despondency at the fate with which the whole country was menaced from the bigotry of its King. In this bristling array, and with such disconsolate thoughts, he travelled back in a forlorn silence, not once ejaculating a single "hem" of complacency; not once attempting to sweeten his imagination by a reference to the palatable contents of his waistcoat pocket.

Reuben, in the meanwhile, remained a prey to equal misery of mind in the wretched gaol of Lyme, which was at that time crowded with prisoners, and totally deficient in most of the accommodations that might minister to their comfort. To these external hardships he was indeed indifferent, but he found it difficult at first to support the contending emotions struggling within him. Of preserving his life he did not entertain the remotest hope. The recollection of the prominent part he had acted, and

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of the fate remorselessly inflicted upon all those of the same rank who had been hitherto arrested, forbade him to turn his thoughts in that direction. It was not death that he feared, but it mortified him to reflect that after all his resolutions to sell his life dearly, rather than suffer himself to be apprehended, he should have been surprized and captured by means of an ignorant peasant woman. He was about to die, too, when his existence was becoming doubly dear and delightful, from the delicious thought that at some future period it might be blessed by the society of the noble-minded Helen. Over this hope, shadowy and distant as it might be, his heart had brooded with all the deep and intense worship of a first love, exalted by gratitude, and secretly cherished in an enthusiastic bosom. It had given a new feeling, a new character, a new aspiration to his soul; and to be suddenly wrenched and torn away from the contemplation of such a boundless felicity, to be driven from a world which the possession of her affections would have rendered so ineffably glorious and enchanting, he felt to be a disruption much

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more terrible than the mere parting with life. To his lost parents, also, his thoughts often reverted, and ever with an increasing pang of pious anguish that his career upon earth should be thus ignominiously cut short, ere he had accomplished that which he had fondly believed to be his destiny, and which, at all events, it had been the solemn determination of his soul to fulfil—a voyage to India for the purpose of attempting the elucidation of their fate. To another would now belong the glory of rescuing them, if, as he firmly believed, they were still living upon some remote, unvisited shore; and tears of filial remorse gushed from his eyes as he reflected that his precipitation had not only withdrawn him from the performance of this imperative duty, but would leave the disgrace of his public execution as a criminal to overwhelm them with confusion upon their return to their native land. Independently of these considerations, he was neither afraid to die, nor ashamed of expiring upon a scaffold, for he gloried in the cause for which he was to suffer, and was resolved not to disgrace it in his last moments. Although he

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could not emulate them in his life or talents, he might at least humbly imitate the firmness of Russel and Sydney, of whose execution he had received such a minute account from the stern old republican Malachi Wardrop: nay, he was resolved to avow his principles at once in open court, to impeach the King of having violated his oath and his duty, and to call upon his fellow-countrymen with his last breath never to abandon the sacred cause of civil and religious liberty, never to renounce the right of an armed resistance to illegal and arbitrary power.

His fellow-prisoners were not of a description to withdraw him by their society from the contemplation of his miserable situation; for they were mostly poor ignorant rustics, or others of the lowest class, who had been engaged in the rebellion, and were waiting the arrival of a vessel to transport them to New England. During the day-time they were allowed to amuse or exercise themselves in the court-yard, when Reuben, glad to escape from their clamour and tumult, generally chose to remain in the ward

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where he slept, that he might indulge his own melancholy thoughts in solitude. One morning, when he was thus occupied, he was surprized by the cautious advance of a homely-looking young woman wearing the appearance of a maid-servant, who, after peering cautiously around to ascertain that they were unobserved, ran up to him, and in an accent that betrayed her to be an Irishwoman, whispered in his ear, —"Master! Master! I come to tell ye to sham sick, and don't ait any victuals for a day or two, but swally these biscuits, which ye must concale about your clows, and ask to be removed to the hospital-room, and then we 'll see can we get ye out of the grip, as I hope we shall do, more by token than ye once did the same for Norry Molloy, my own mother that suck'd me. But lose no time, Master, for if they bundle ye to the Castle at Dorchester, ye 're just clane done for, and there 's an ind on 't."—At these words she handed him a little packet of biscuits, and rapidly quitted the apartment.

By this most unexpected visit a sudden and

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prodigious revolution was effected in Reuben's feelings. Naturally sanguine in his temperament, he was elevated at once from the deepest despondency to all the ardour of expectation, and leaping in imagination over the walls of his prison, he already saw a visionary futurity gleaming before his eyes, wherein his union with Helen, the restoration of his lost parents, and the emancipation of his country, combined to render the remainder of his life an Elysium upon earth. Losing no time in following the kind injunctions he had received, he left the gaol allowance of provisions untouched, indemnifying himself out of his private store of biscuits, complained of constant sickness from the bad air of the crowded ward, and caused such representations to be made to the military governor of the gaol, who had been appointed since the rebellion, and who was the master of the woman by whom he had been so lately accosted, that he was shortly ordered to be removed to the infirmary. This was a sort of gallery forming the attic of the building, and at the moment of his becoming its inmate it contained no other occu-

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pant, a circumstance which enabled him to have frequent and unrestrained communication with his female friend, whose duty it was to attend upon the sick as a nurse. In these conversations she informed him that her name was Mary, that she was married to a soldier, who was also a servant to the Governor, and that her mother had charged her to supply him with a long rope that he might let himself down from the window in the night-time, as soon as she should have made preliminary arrangements for receiving him and conveying him over the water. Its great height from the ground having been considered a sufficient security for a hospital-room, the window was only provided with a single perpendicular bar, so that by removing one or two of the bricks on either side, a person of moderate size might easily squeeze himself through. By the assistance of tools which Mary furnished to him, this trifling impediment was soon overcome, and the bricks having been so loosened as to be taken out at pleasure, he impatiently awaited the time that was to be fixed upon for his escape. Mary at

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length presented herself for this purpose, instructing him to lower himself from the window that night, as soon as he heard the church clock strike twelve, not to fear the sentinel, since her husband had undertaken to keep him occupied in the front of the building, and to climb over the outer wall, by means of a ladder which would be let down to him from the top, when he would find Norry Molloy on the outside, and would only have to follow her farther instructions.

Perhaps the midnight chimes had never been listened to with more intense interest than by Reuben on the night in question, and the last toll had hardly ceased sounding, when he had fixed his rope to the iron bar, squeezed himself through the aperture, and was dangling in mid air on his descent to the ground, which he presently reached in safety. No sooner had he done so than he glided across the court-yard in search of the ladder, which he presently discovered, fixed ready for his reception, and rapidly mounted to the top of the wall, where he found Norry Molloy crouching down like a cat. "Sate yourself beside me, and howld your whisht,

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honey!" she whispered to Reuben, who obeyed her orders, when she drew up the ladder, placed it on the outside, and when they had both descended to the ground, again removed it, and committed it gently to the water of the harbour, which nearly washed the walls of the prison. No sooner had this been done, than she stepped without the smallest noise into a small boat, directed Reuben to lie down at the bottom, extended herself by his side, and carefully pulled a tarpaulin over herself and her companion. Sentinels were stationed every night on both sides of the entrance to the harbour, with strict orders to fire into every boat that might attempt to steal out, since it was known that some of the rebels had thus contrived to get away; while armed cruisers were directed to keep a sharp look-out in the offing, and overhaul any suspicious small craft that might appear to be making seawards. Norry Molloy well knew, therefore, that any attempt to row out of the harbour would be madness, and that their only chance was to float out with the ebb tide, as if it were an empty boat that had got adrift. In this manner their boat was presently making slow and

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silent progress towards the sea, but it had no sooner approached the entrance to the harbour than a treacherous gleam of moonlight revealing it at the same moment to two of the sentinels, they were challenged, and called upon to pull ashore instantly. This summons was twice repeated in a tone of increasing loudness and anger, when one of the soldiers, both of whom belonged to a detachment from an Irish regiment, called out, "Then by St. Patrick I 'll put a bullet through ye! and so here goes!"

Reuben could not help wincing, as he expected a ball every instant to whiz into the boat, but his companion muttered in a low whisper, "Be aisy, jewel, be aisy; I knew by the suck of the tide we would be challenged from the Quay, and so I laid myself on this side of ye, that my owld body might have the bullet, would they fire at us."

"Botheration, Corny!" cried the second sentinel just as his comrade was about to pull the trigger, "would you be after alarming the whole garrison for an impty boat, for divil a sowl is there in it? Yonder lies a rope with a hook to

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it, so pull her up, Corny, pull her up." The party thus addressed laid down his firelock, seized the rope, and tossing it after them, Reuben, with no small trepidation, heard it dash into the water close to the boat's stern. An angry execration followed: it was thrown a second time, the hook falling upon the tarpaulin, and sending a thrill through Reuben's body, though he breathed a little more freely as he heard it rattle over the side, and again plunge into the water.

Another loud execration burst from the lips of the soldier, as he again seized the rope, and running a little way after the boat, which was now floating a-head, threw it with so good an aim that the hook fell close to Norry Molloy's head, and would infallibly have pulled the fugitives ashore in one minute, had she not put out her finger and thumb before the rope was tightened, and held the hook in such a direction that it again slipped over the side.

"Agrah, now Corny!" she whispered, as she heard it splash into the sea, "you caught no fish this time, I'll engage. Try again, honey,



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try again." Fortunately no farther attempts of this kind were made, the soldier being afraid to remove farther from his post, and having returned to quarrel with his comrade for not having come to his assistance. Their vociferation sounded fainter and fainter as the little bark floated away from them; no other challenge alarmed them; and as the boat began to be more agitated by the waves Reuben heard his companion whispering in his ear, "There we are, any how, in the mouth of the harbour, and in five minutes more we'll be clane out of their sight!"

To make assurance double sure they remained under cover for a quarter of an hour longer, when Norry threw off the tarpaulin, seized the oars which she had concealed at the bottom of the boat, and resisting all Reuben's offers to divide her labour, pulled away to the westward with all the skill and vigour of an experienced rower. The King's cruisers, she informed him, generally stationed themselves to the eastward to intercept fugitives making for the Continent, on which account she had desired Mick to lay to with his cutter off Beer Head, for which

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point she was then rowing, and to keep a sharp look out for them. A favourable breeze soon springing up, she laid by the oars, hoisted a small sail, and while she sent her keen eye peering on every side for any of the King's craft that might render it necessary to change their course, she proceeded to inform her companion that she would have joined her son Mick in the enterprize ashore, but that she thought the chances were ten to one against its success, and there was no use in exposing the last of her sons to danger when she could do without him, and only risk her own old life, which would be no great loss any how. She added, that she had no sooner learnt his imprisonment than she had concerted the whole plan of his escape with her daughter Mary, and reckoned it particularly lucky that she had thus far accomplished it, since in two or three days the whole of the prisoners, not ordered for transportation, were to have been removed to Dorchester gaol. When Reuben considered what would have been the consequences to herself had she failed, and reflected upon the affectionate heroism with which



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she had exposed herself to the shot of the sentinel, endangering her own life to protect his, together with the perfect *sang froid* she had manifested through the whole transaction, he scarcely knew which most to admire,—the generosity with which she had undertaken his rescue, the skill with which she had planned it, or her presence of mind and courage in its execution. Had she been wounded upon the occasion he declared that it would have rendered him perfectly miserable; and he the more rejoiced at her escape from such a calamity, since it would inevitably have led to a discovery and prevention of the enterprise. "And why so, my darlint?" inquired Norry. "Hadn't I foreseen it all, and sure, had I been struck, Divil a halfporth wud ye have known about the matter, for I wud have lain by your side and bled to death as quite as a lamb, only maybe afore I died I wud jist have whispered 'quits!' in your ear, for the good turn ye did me when you took me out of the grip, yonder on the green." In the warmest terms that a heartfelt gratitude could inspire, Reuben declared he should ever

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consider himself her debtor, expressing a hope that the time would arrive when he might testify his feelings in this respect by something more substantial than mere professions. "Blarney and Bletherumskite!" ejaculated Norry, looking up in his face with an angry surprize; "is it reward ye 're speaking of? What is it you mane? Ah, now, honey dear, lave that alone, and niver say another word of that same, for sorrow a rap will I ever touch from your father's son, nor wouldn't be such a negre. Shall I tell ye the true story out of the face? I wouldn't be happy till we cried quits thegether, and so ye see I jist did it to folly my own likins, that I might have rest an' pace, and not upon your account at all, at all. Musha! God bless ye, nevertheless."

While they were thus discoursing they cleared a point of land, when the cutter hove in sight, and making a signal, which was answered by Norry, bore down to them, and in a short time Reuben and his companion were taken on board the Greyhound. Norry's darling son Mick looked like what he was, a reckless, law-

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less freebooter of the sea, ready for any desperate enterprize which so small a cutter and so limited a crew could accomplish. The latter comprised only another sturdy-looking man, whose aspect bespoke him to be a fitting comrade for Mick, and two stout boys; to whom might now be added Norry Molloy herself, who was as efficient as any sailor, either for purposes of seamanship or violence. Reuben had wished to be conveyed to Holland, but it happened that Mick had been lately carrying on a lucrative trade in bringing off the French Protestants, who were flying from the persecution then raging, and had engaged his vessel to a party at Boulogne, who were waiting his return. To this port, therefore, he announced his intention of sailing, and as Reuben was too much rejoiced at his escape to be particular as to the place where he was to take refuge, and felt besides that he ought not to interfere with the arrangements of his preservers, he offered no objections, but left them at liberty to follow their own plan. Mick declared that he had no fear whatever of the King's cruisers, since he

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could sail round and round the fastest of them if he chose it, observing, that although one of them had lately succeeded in putting a shot into him, it had been fired from too great a distance to do him any serious damage. As a measure of precaution, however, he kept such a good offing that he cleared all the vessels stationed off the coast, and in due time sailed into the harbour of Boulogne, ran up alongside the quay, moored his vessel, and leaped ashore, followed by Norry Molloy, Reuben, and the rest of his crew.

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## CHAPTER IX.

"And if that any ill she heard of any,
She would it eke, and make it worse by telling,
And take great joy to publish it to many,
That every matter worse was for her melling:
Her name was hight Detraction."

SPENSER.

ARRIVING at Lyme in the disconsolate mood which we have described, Goldingham, after long and anxious deliberation with himself as to the course that he should adopt, determined that he would proceed in the first instance to the prison, and inform his unfortunate nephew that he must prepare himself immediately for another world, since there was no mercy to be expected in this. Painful as the interview must be to both parties, he held it his duty not to avoid it,

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and fortifying himself with such arguments as he thought best calculated to administer consolation to Reuben, while he set apart two broad pieces as a bribe, should there be any difficulty in obtaining access to him, he rang the prison bell, and declared the object of his visit. Being shown into a little lobby, perfumed with tobacco smoke and the mingled odours of Nantz and lamb's-wool, he was presently joined by the gaoler, into whose hand he slipped the pieces of gold, and requested the favour of half an hour's conversation with his prisoner, Reuben Apsley. "By my fackins! master," said the fellow, dropping the money into his pocket with a scowling grin, "I 'll give you a score of such megs, if you 'll only bring me within earshot of the clapperdogeon. Curse the counterfeit crank! who would have thought, when he sneaked in here with his patched castor, muddy stampers, an ash filch in his fambler, and a beer-stained nabchette upon his nob, that the Abram-cove was rhino-cerical; had the megs, the smelts, the darby in his pouch? 'Swounds! I ought to wink through a halter myself for



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not having searched him with my own famblers."

"If there be any gaol fees undischarged, I am ready to pay them for the poor boy," said Goldingham; not thoroughly understanding this effusion of slang.

"And then to sham Abram!" continued the enraged gaoler, without noticing his observation, "and to get himself removed to the 'Firmary, which is no stronger than the cock-loft of a bouzing-ken. Curse him! if I could once come within reach of his quarrons, I warrant I 'd spoil him for breaking a second time out of the stone pound."

"What? what? what?" inquired Isaac, drawing the spectacles from his nose, and bringing his staring eyes close to the gaoler's face; "do you mean to say that he has escaped—broken prison—got away—given you the slip—shown you a light pair of heels—hey, how, what?"

"'Swounds and snails! don't bring your long nose so close to my mouth, for if I give a snap at it, I promise you I shall hold it faster than

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I did yonder runaway crank. He must have had plenty of chinkers, or he never could have bribed any one to bring him the rope. A murrain seize them all! A shorter rope shall serve his turn another time, I'll engage. However, we shall nab the young shake-shanks still, and if he again shows us leg-bail, may the Devil rock me to sleep in a hempen cradle?"

In answer to the inquiries of his visitant, the gaoler detailed to him, but not without many interjectional execrations and vows of vengeance, the whole plan of Reuben's escape, admitting that nothing had been heard of him since he left the prison; a statement which he had no sooner concluded, than Goldingham, letting fall his spectacles and horn-headed cane upon the stone floor of the lobby, began snapping his fingers, and springing up first on one toe, then on the other, while he repeatedly ejaculated, "Clever boy! clever boy! well done Reuben! make a man of business of him after all. Better than a Popish plot. Didn't think he had so much gumption in him. Ah, ha! Master Jeffreys, you're done, you're done! saved

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my money; and saved my poor boy too, hem!" His right hand accompanied the latter exclamation, as if striking his cane upon the ground, nor was he aware that he had dropped it until he missed the usual sharp sound of the ferule; when he stooped down, picked it up, thrust his broken spectacles into his coat pocket, instead of returning them to their shagreen case, and seizing one of the gaoler's hands in the agitation of the moment, shook it with great cordiality, saying, "My dear Sir, I give you joy, I give you joy!" when he strutted out of the prison with an air very little short of a swagger, making the stones ring to his iron-tipped walking staff, and the walls echo with the most sonorous "Hem!" of which he had ever been delivered.

Elated to the very highest pitch with these unexpected good tidings, he determined to walk instantly to Harpsden Hall to communicate them to Helen, who had completely won his heart, not less by her generous behaviour to his nephew, than by her being such a complete woman of business; and started in execution

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of this purpose, with a rapidity that presently compelled him to halt and take breath. As he chinked the guineas in his breeches-pocket during this little pause, he reflected, with an ineffable triumph of mind, that he had offered Jeffreys ten thousand of these jingling yellow-boys for that which he had now got for nothing; an escape of his purse, which seemed hardly less marvellous and delightful than that of his nephew, and forming together a combination of good fortune, of which he could only evince his sense by drawing two lumps of sugar from his waistcoat, and victoriously crushing them with his teeth, instead of suffering them to dilute complacently and economically in his mouth, according to his usual mode. This process was repeated more than once before he reached Harpsden Hall, where his wishes were gratified by his finding Helen in the drawing-room, unaccompanied by her sister or Lady Trevanian.

Most anxious and painful had been the state of her mind during his absence, for though her knowledge of Jeffreys's venality led her to expect a favourable issue from his application,

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she could not but advert to the dreadful alternative that awaited his failure; while the necessity of concealing every external manifestation of her emotions made the pangs of suspense more acute within. By withholding Adeline, under various pretexts, from paying her customary visits, and withdrawing her from the society of those gossips who might be likely to communicate the fact of Reuben's imprisonment, she had accomplished one great object of her benevolent heart—she had kept her in total ignorance of that calamity; and it was therefore with double anxiety, both on her sister's account and her own, that she heard the servant announce the name of Mr. Goldingham. The colour fled suddenly from her cheeks as he entered the room; but it as quickly returned, flushing at once her face, brow, and bosom, when she saw him advance with a cheerful countenance and an elastic step, twiddling his fingers, and only waiting till the servant had again closed the door to give them an audible smack. Auguring his perfect success from these triumphant exhibitions, Helen ran forward to

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meet him, exclaiming as she clasped his hand, "He is saved! he is saved! I see he is, and with my whole heart do I congratulate you!"

"My dear, clever young lady," said Goldingham, putting her hand to his lips and kissing it, "we are both saved—Reuben has walked out of pound, and ten thousand pounds have been very near walking out of my pocket. Ten thousand pounds! Only consider, my dear Madam, what a sum it is;"—and he again chinked the guineas in his pocket, and repeated the amount in a slow solemn tone, for now that his nephew's neck was for the present out of the halter, the importance of his own pecuniary escape seemed to be magnified to his imagination every time that he reverted to it. Helen, however, was by no means so exhilarated as himself, when she learnt the failure of his negociation and the real circumstances of Reuben's flight; for she had hoped that a full pardon had been purchased, and though it was doubtless a subject of congratulation that he should have escaped from prison, he remained exposed to the same difficulties as before his apprehen-

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sion, and might again be seized ere he could make arrangements for crossing the water. Goldingham was too much elated to harbour any such desponding thoughts. "Adad! Madam," he cried, "a scalded dog's afraid of cold water: I suspect that he will not again come within stone's throw of a prison, even when he may do it as safely as you or I. The rogue has money in his pockets, thanks to your kindness: how I do love a woman of business! (by the way, I may as well repay it to you;) and he that has found a golden key to open a prison door, may find a silver oar to pull him over the water. Let him alone, let him alone! rash and hotheaded as he is, you see the young scapegrace is sharp enough at a pinch. He has dangled by a rope once, and I take it he won't like to repeat the experiment with the hemp round his neck. Can't expect a second running noose. I beg ten thousand pounds—pardons I mean," continued Goldingham, observing that Helen looked rather grave, "for being so jocose—don't often play the wag, though Jemmy Tibbs used to say that I could be a droll dog

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when I had a mind; but really, my dear young lady, I cannot help thinking that the same good friend who helped him out of window, may ferry him over the water, and I hope before long to hear that he has shaken hands with Mynheer Hans Mundungus, and perhaps got a protection from the P. of O.—You know whom I mean; but mum's the word.

"Hist! hist!" cried Helen—"I hear my mother's voice. Remember, Mr. Goldingham, that until we gain some certain intelligence of Mr. Apsley's safety, we must all observe the same inviolable secrecy as before, or we may have to supply his place in Lyme gaol without finding another window to fly out of."

Lady Trevanian now entered the apartment, Goldingham turned the conversation to some common-place topic, and shortly after took his departure, when Helen hastened to her sister to communicate to her the news of Reuben's imprisonment, which she had hitherto concealed, adding at the same time the fact of his escape, and expressing the hope, in which his uncle so confidently participated, that the same friend who

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had aided him in that enterprize, would procure his safe conveyance to the Continent.

"*O Ciel! vraiment cela me fait frissonner,*" exclaimed Adeline—"La, Helen! only think if the rope had broken. I saw one break once when Jacob Hall was dancing on it at Whitehall, and Lady Hamilton turned as pale as ashes; indeed every body said she was in love with the *fanfaron*. Heigho! may I die, Helen, if my Arcadius be not a sweet interesting fellow. Did I not tell you that he was *spirituel* and *éveillé*? Is not the affair altogether piquant and *romanesque*?—more heroic than any thing in Pharamond or Cleopatra? sweeter than any incident in Nat. Lee's Rival Queens, or Dryden's Indian Emperor? I have no doubt he will get safe over to Holland, be included in the amnesty, and come back *pour soupirer à mes genoux*."

"I shall not feel happy, I confess," said Helen, "till I have seen——"

"Oh, don't talk of feeling," interposed Adeline—"you cannot have an atom of it, or you would never have been so calm when that hor-

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rid fellow Jeffreys threatened us all so dreadfully, and my poor dear Arcadius was so near being discovered. La, Helen! how shocking it would be if they seize him again after all! I should never be able to support it: may I die if I shouldn't die:—indeed my poor heart is too susceptible; I have always been *le jouet de la sensibilité.* Heigho!"—She crossed her hands, cast up her eyes, and assumed an expression that was meant to be particularly sentimental and tender, but her looks happening to fall upon a new manteau hanging upon the opposite wall, she quite forgot that she was the *jouet de la sensibilité,* and running to take it down, she threw it over her shoulders, paraded before Helen, and continued in a totally different tone of voice—"*Dis donc, ma soeur,* don't you find this *distingué et gentil.* It is of shot China, you see, trimmed with right point d'Espagne, and lined with philamott sarcenet. May I die if I don't think it would look killing in the front row of the King's box, or just to slip on when you go out to walk in the wooden gallery at Whitehall, after you have got warm with

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dancing the Bransles, or Grammont's Galliard. —Oh, my dear, dear London! when shall I see thee again?"

Helen bestowed upon the manteau all the commendations it merited, and finding her sister much less in need of consolation than she had anticipated, she slipped out of the room, leaving the "plaything of sensibility" so deeply engaged in bridling and coquetting, and looking first over one shoulder, then over the other, as she ducked, and dived, and swam up and down before her swing glass, that she did not for some time perceive herself to be alone. By ringing the changes in this manner upon her wardrobe, by reading her romances, by singing French chansonnettes to the accompaniment of her guitar, by betaking herself to the summer-house, and gazing for hours from the window, as if she expected her lover to serenade her from beneath in the disguise of a minstrel, or to come capering down the road like a hero of romance, and whisk her up behind him on his palfrey, she contrived to beguile the tedious time that brought her no tidings of her Arca-

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dius. With the usual resource of sanguine and deserted damsels, she drew largely upon hope, so as to make future bliss atone for present disappointment, though she was not without her fits of occasional despondency, in which she fixed herself in the most pensive and interesting attitude she could devise, assumed a most lachrymose expression, suffered her hair to fall about her ears *à la negligé*, threw up her eyes appealingly to Heaven, and vented ever and anon a most suspirious "heigho!"

Helen in the meanwhile, without exhibiting the smallest alteration in her appearance or deportment, was a prey to the most acute anxiety, almost afraid to inquire about the passing events lest she should learn the fatal news of Reuben's being again arrested, and yet too deeply interested in his safety to be able to refrain from soliciting intelligence. None reached her, and she gathered hope from this absence of all information, although the pain of suspense seemed rather to increase than diminish with the lapse of time. Nor was Goldingham much less distressed than herself. The conso-

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lation of having saved his money was rapidly wearing away, and he even began to wish that the ten thousand pounds were in the pocket of Jeffreys, provided he could see his nephew pardoned, and safe by his side; when through the friendly activity of Norry Molloy a letter was conveyed to him bearing the signature of Reuben, and dated from Boulogne. For fear of its falling into hostile hands it was very guardedly worded, merely announcing his safe arrival in France, and making no reference whatever to the mode of his escape; but the main fact was quite sufficient for Goldingham, who again hugged himself in high glee on having saved his money, and hurried off to Harpsden Hall, where his joyful tidings diffused, as it may easily be imagined, a not less lively delight than they had imparted to himself. Helen felt a load removed from her bosom by which she had long been oppressed, testifying by glistening eyes and an animated expression of benignant joy the effect of the intelligence; while Adelaide, simpering and looking as pleased and as pretty as she could, danced about the room, declaring

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she had always prognosticated his escape, because he was so *spirituél* and *vif*, and *inventif*; after the delivery of which opinion she turned her thoughts to the serious consideration of her wedding dress, a subject which had already flitted athwart her mind in the intervals of her more important frivolities, and which now came to occupy a prominent place in her reveries.

Although Reuben, however, was saved, Helen reminded Adeline that their own lives were still in jeopardy as his aiders and abettors, on which account it was necessary to observe the same strict secrecy as before. They both looked forward therefore with an increased impatience to the appearance of the amnesty, which it was now well known would be very shortly published. Most of those who were deemed competent to purchase a protection were understood to be in the list of the excepted, and a notorious bargaining for pardons was busily carried on in various quarters. The poor girls at Taunton who had worked the white banner for the Duke of Monmouth, having been declared amenable to the utmost severities of the

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law, their ransom had been given as a perquisite to the maids of honour, who dispatched a special agent into Somersetshire to extort as much as possible from the terror and affections of their parents. Others were compounding in like manner for their offences, under which circumstances Helen submitted to Goldingham, that as his nephew's pardon might now probably be obtained on moderate terms, since he was beyond the reach of the law, while he must always remain an exile should he be in the list of exceptions, it might be advisable to renew the negotiation for his receiving the full benefit of the amnesty. This hint was gratefully accepted by the uncle, who declared, however, that he would leave the conclusion of the bargain in London to his friend Jemmy Tibbs, as he was determined never to exchange another word with the remorseless, blustering, and knavish Judge who had rejected his previous offers. To Jemmy Tibbs accordingly was the negotiation entrusted, and as Jeffreys, now that he could not gratify his rancour, was very willing to indulge his rapacity, he readily stipulated,

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for the sum of a thousand pounds, to grant the application in its full extent. It is very possible that Reuben's name would never have been specified in the list of the unpardoned, and that the worthy Judge, aware of this fact, was guilty of little less than a robbery in taking the money. Be this as it may, the contract was concluded; after various delays the so long and so anxiously expected amnesty at length made its appearance; hundreds of painfully throbbing hearts were tranquillized by its publication; and perhaps, among the many families into whose bosoms it carried peace, it rendered none more supremely happy than Helen and Adeline, who not only saw themselves rewarded for their generous solicitude by the safety of its object, but were relieved from all apprehension of the dreadful fate in which they would have been inevitably involved, had their offence been discovered.

By Helen especially was it hailed with a more than common exultation, for independently of the other considerations in which her heart was deeply interested, it involved one of paramount importance; one, indeed, that was dearer to



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her than life itself:—we allude to the imputations upon her character, which Lady Crockatt and Mrs. Chatsworth, in spite of their pledge to the contrary, had circulated, by innuendoes and insinuations, rather than by direct averment,—which had come to her knowledge by means of her faithful and confiding friend Emily; and which the amnesty now allowed her to refute with perfect safety to all parties. Circumstances rendered the prompt performance of this duty peculiarly imperative upon her. During her residence with her bachelor uncle, he had, in his just indignation against Lady Trevanian's notorious indiscretions, put Helen in possession of all her misconduct, and held her up as a lesson and a warning upon her return home. The daughter had, in consequence, silently and unobtrusively, but with all the zeal of filial affection, endeavoured to repair, as far as could be accomplished by individual exertions, the errors of her parent, and to build up, if possible, a new reputation for the family. Hence she had strenuously advocated the plan for retiring into the country. Hence

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the guarded, scrupulous attention to propriety and decorum, which had procured for her, from her present calumniators, the name of a prim, demure, prudish, young minx; and hence her anxiety to remove every suspicion that might attach to the name of Trevanian, and interfere with her pious purpose of gradually reconciling her mother to society, and restoring her to that general reception which her birth and talents entitled her to expect, though she had forfeited it by the glaring improprieties of her early life.

Animated with these pious hopes and wishes, she hastened in the first instance to Emily Hartfield, but had no sooner opened her lips on the subject of the *eclaircissement*, then her friend interrupted her by exclaiming—"Not on my account, my dear Helen, not to me is any explanation necessary. I blush to think that I should ever have desired it, and if I consent to listen to your statement, it is only that I may be enabled, when slanderers would traduce your fair fame, to tell them they are liars in their teeth." She coloured deeply with indig-

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nation, and Helen, observing her emotion, expressed her hope that she would never have occasion to use language which might be considered somewhat too masculine, both for the speaker and the occasion.

"Neither for one nor the other," resumed Emily, quickly:—"These are the occasions when I feel most tempted to speak like a man; to wish even that the man's law of honour were universally binding, that so the malignant scandal-mongers of our own sex might be made responsible with their lives for the unbridled license of their tongues. Let them be silenced by fear, if honesty and shame have lost their hold upon the slanderers."

Smiling at the generous warmth of her friend, Helen proceeded to explain the occurrences which had led to the apparently mysterious scene in the painting-room; mentioning the name of the party then concealed in the closet; the unexpected circumstances which had induced herself and Adeline to interest themselves in his preservation; and the alarming

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events by which they had been agitated while he remained an unwelcome though an unbetrayed inmate of Harpsden Hall. Emily testified the highest admiration of her friend's benevolent intrepidity, as well as of the prudence that had enabled her to steer through the dangers with which Adeline's indiscretion had environed her; and willingly consented to accompany her to Lady Crockatt's for the purpose of redeeming her pledge, and making the promised explanation.

Mrs. Chatsworth and Miss Crawley were both with her Ladyship when they arrived, which Helen considered so far fortunate, as it would save any subsequent repetition of a statement she felt it humiliating to offer, however complete might be the exculpation it afforded. "Oh! my dear Miss Trevanian," cried Lady Crockatt, when she had finished her narrative,—"you need not say a word more. I know you are always fastidiously, squeamishly correct and decorous, and all that sort of thing; and if *you* think it proper to have a young fellow



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concealed in the summer-house, and even in the closet of your own painting-room, we, of course, can have no right to object."

"Your Ladyship cannot deny the philanthropy, the love of mankind which Miss Trevanian has evinced," said Mrs. Chatsworth sneeringly. "The young gentleman, to be sure, was a rebel, and of course ought to have been considered an enemy, in the house of Lord Trevanian; but the Scripture, you know, commands us to love our enemies, and I dare say so devout a young lady would not fail to obey its injunctions."

"Especially where the party in question is so remarkably handsome as this Mr. Apsley," added Miss Crawley, with a flippant toss of the head.

"Faugh! I declare it makes me quite sick," resumed her Ladyship: "Give me my drops, Crawley. Really the whole thing is too ridiculous: I hate hypocrisy worse than selfishness."

"I assure you that I was hastening to you at the ball," continued Mrs. Chatsworth, "when you fainted away on learning Mr. Apsley's ar-

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rest, to recommend that your stays should be loosened, but you were hurried off so suddenly that I could not overtake you."

It was with great difficulty that the warm-hearted Emily had reined in her indignant impatience during the utterance of these ungenerous and unladylike taunts; she could now endure no more, and was bursting out into an angry rebuke, which would certainly have been conveyed in no very measured terms, had not Helen stopped her by gently putting her hand upon her lips, while she exclaimed, "Hush! Emily, hush! if these ladies forget themselves, let us not imitate their example. Insinuations such as these are more disgraceful to their authors than their object." So saying, she took Emily's arm, and bowing to the censorious trio with an air of distant but polite dignity, quitted the apartment, and returned to Harpsden Hall.

Now that the communication could be made without danger, Adeline, anxious to be the first bearer of the good tidings, hurried to her mother, and with numerous interjections, both in French and English, and as many inquiries

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whether it was not a charming adventure, just like a story in a play or a romance, detailed the whole progress of her acquaintance with Reuben, up to the time of his flight from the house; concluding with the statement that he was the adopted son and undoubted heir of the rich Mr. Goldingham, that he had unequivocally declared himself her suitor, that he was passionately in love with her, and she doubted not would rush forward to make a formal demand of her hand as soon as he should return to England. Much as Lady Trevanian saw to condemn in the silly and hazardous conduct of her volatile daughter, and imminent as had been the perils to which her levity had exposed the whole family, she did not, now that the danger was happily past and over, by any means regret the occurrence, although she felt it her duty to warn her against any such wild and improper projects in future. It comported with her Ladyship's views, that her daughter should marry and live in the country rather than in London; her knowledge of Adeline's flighty character, and, above all, her indiscreet behaviour in the present affair, ren-

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dered it peculiarly desirable that she should be respectably settled, lest her romantic temperament should hurry her into some objectionable union, and no person appeared more eligible for this purpose than the adopted son and heir of their wealthy neighbour. Relying, therefore, upon her unqualified averments, she resolved to give all due encouragement to his suit, should he present himself at Harpsden Hall as the claimant of her hand.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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